United Nations S/PV.7664

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7664th meeting
Friday, 1 April 2016, 7 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Santa Rosa
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Akahori
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Walbridge
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Barro
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in Burundi

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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The meeting was called to order at 7.05 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): As this is the first formal meeting of the Security Council for the month of April, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Ismael Gaspar Martins, Permanent Representative of Angola, for his service as President of the Council for the month of March 2016. I am sure I speak for all the members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Gaspar Martins and his delegation for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Burundi

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Burundi to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/301, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Japan and Spain.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): Before we proceed to the voting, I would like to tell you how pleased I am, Mr. President, that we are meeting now to adopt the draft resolution on Burundi contained in document S/2016/301, thus marking the launch of the Chinese presidency of the Security Council, a presidency to which I extend my most heartfelt wishes for success. I would also like to thank all my colleagues and their teams for the constructive discussions that have enabled us to meet here for this important vote. I would briefly like to recall the objectives of our draft resolution.

The draft has five main objectives. The first, and main, objective of our draft resolution is to back African efforts to bring about an emergence from the crisis in Burundi, efforts undertaken by both the East African Community and the African Union. In backing those efforts, we want to contribute to forging inclusive and genuine dialogue — I will come back to this — among Burundians, and to find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

The second objective of this draft resolution is to bolster the United Nations presence in Burundi and strengthen the team of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Mr. Jamal Benomar. This is fundamental. We need the United Nations to be more present on the ground and, as the Security Council, we should be able to follow the situation in Burundi closely so that we can be alerted if the situation continues to deteriorate and so that we would be in a position to react in timely fashion to avoid the worst.

The third objective of the draft resolution is to call for the immediate launch of genuine inclusive dialogue between the Burundian Government and all stakeholders committed to a peaceful solution, whether present in their country or not. That is a fundamental message for reconciliation among Burundians.

The fourth objective is to request the Secretary-General to propose to the Security Council options for a United Nations police presence in Burundi, and that within a maximum period of 15 days. The goal in that regard is also to back the efforts of the African Union, which has deployed observers to Burundi.

Finally, the fifth objective is to preserve and consolidate the achievements of the Arusha Agreement by respecting both the letter and spirit of the Agreement. These peace agreements serve more than ever as a compass that should guide all stakeholders in Burundi and the international community.

I will not go any further. I would just like to stress our collective responsibility. France is convinced that the Security Council must do everything it can to help Burundians to return to the path of peace and reconciliation. That is our responsibility as the Security Council. That is our responsibility vis-à-vis the people of Burundi. That is the thrust of our draft resolution.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain,

Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2279 (2016).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like, at the outset, to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to extend our thanks to Ambassador Ismael Gaspar Martins, Permanent Representative of Angola, for his prudent presidency of the Council last month.

Egypt welcomes the resolution just adopted by the Council today on the situation in Burundi (resolution 2279 (2016)), which comes as a result of constructive consultations that reflect the great importance accorded by all members of the Council to the situation in Burundi and their desire to find the best ways to help Burundi overcome the humanitarian and security difficulties it faces. The resolution is based on the constructive efforts undertaken by the Government of Burundi to improve the conditions on the ground as well as those undertaken by many international and regional partners over the past few months. Those efforts were reflected in the important visits undertaken by the Secretary-General, the high-level delegation of the African Union and the Burundi country configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the prior visit undertaken by members of the Security Council in January.

Egypt welcomes the resolution as an important step that will bolster the efforts of the United Nations and regional partners to reach a political solution to the crisis. The mediation role played by the African Union and the East African Community with a view to launching a serious and inclusive dialogue in Burundi has strengthened the foundational work of the United Nations and regional partners together with that of the Burundian authorities and national stakeholders designed to foster a national dialogue that would address the challenges facing Burundi in the areas of security and the rule of law.

In conclusion, Egypt would like to express its wish to continue working with other members of the Council to enforce resolution 2279 (2016) and build on it through further efforts by the United Nations with a view to overcoming the current challenges and difficulties and returning to the pursuit of development and the promotion of peace in cooperation with Burundi's bilateral, regional and international partners.

Mr. Barro (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first statement we are making under your leadership, Mr. President, the delegation of Senegal would like to warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency and wish you every possible success in the coming month. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the delegation of Angola for the way in which it conducted the business of the Security Council during the month of March.

Today's vote follows a series of initiatives undertaken within the framework of the United Nations since the beginning of the year and clearly demonstrates the interest that we have taken in the situation in Burundi. The delegation of Senegal, in taking part in the negotiations on the text of the resolution we have just adopted (resolution 2279 (2016)), has striven to forge, alongside other members of the Council, the consensus that was so evident here today, because in our eyes it is of primary importance that we show a united cohesive front in tackling the situation in Burundi.

It therefore behoves me to pay tribute to the spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding that prevailed and enabled us to achieve this conclusion to a process that was launched a few weeks ago, following the visit of the Council to Burundi. The Secretary-General, as well as a high-level delegation of the African Union composed of five Heads of State and Government, then also visited Bujumbura. With respect to those initiatives, my delegation would especially like to underscore that the current resolution is intended to serve as a formal framework for bringing into harmony all of the international community's efforts.

It is therefore important to take note of the resolution's mention of the main results achieved by the high-level delegation of the African Union and the new momentum generated by the strengthening of regional mediation undertaken by Ugandan President assisted in this since the most recent summit of the East African Community by the former President of Tanzania, Mr. Benjamin Mkapa. In our eyes, the current resolution

could also serve as a tool to enable the Secretariat's team led by Mr. Jamal Benomar to maintain and strengthen its interaction with the regional mediation and the African Union to create conditions conducive to a cessation of violence, the protection of civilians and the effective launch of an inclusive dialogue.

Finally, it seems to us to be of primary importance to recall the necessity to configure the United Nations presence in Burundi in a way to meet all the challenges of the situation, including a gradual approach mindful of the momentum behind the action of regional and continental actors.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): This evening we have sent a clear and unanimous message. It is time for the Government of Burundi to live up to the commitments President Nkurunziza made to the Secretary-General, to the international community and, most important, to the people of Burundi themselves. That means that the Government of Burundi must commit fully to the mediated dialogue and that the Government must show its firm commitment by agreeing to a timetable and a participants list for genuine and inclusive talks.

Support from the United Nations will be critical if the talks are to succeed. We therefore support the strengthening of Special Adviser Benomar's team to buttress the mediated dialogue. But let me be clear: President Nkurunziza needs to commit to working with the United Nations, and he needs to let Mr. Benomar's team provide the technical support that is so vital to the success of genuine dialogue. Such support is not unconditional. The Council and Mr. Benomar need to be clear that the United Nations will not support a Government that habitually commits human rights violations against its own people.

We have sent a clear message today. Through this resolution we have provided valuable tools to help deliver the peace and stability that the citizens of Burundi deserve. Let us now work together to secure that outcome.

Mr. Akahori (Japan): On the occasion of the first meeting of the Security Council for this month, Japan would like to congratulate China on its assumption of the presidency for the month of April. We promise you, Sir, our full cooperation.

Japan welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2279 (2016). I would like to thank France for taking the lead in preparing the resolution, of which Japan is pleased to be a co-sponsor.

The United Nations should work together with the African Union and the East African Community to find a solution to the Burundian crisis through dialogue. We must stop violence and human rights violations in Burundi. As members of the Security Council, it is our responsibility to take action to prevent a further deterioration of the situation on the ground. We expect that the United Nations enhanced presence in Burundi will contribute to strengthening an adequate channel between the Security Council and the Burundian parties. We consider today's adoption an important first step. We look forward to discussing, seriously and actively, the options that will be presented to us by the Secretary-General.

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by congratulating and thanking the Permanent Representative of Angola, Ambassador Gaspar Martins, and his colleagues for their work in leading the Security Council in March. I would also like to express to you, Ambassador Liu Jieyi, our pleasure at seeing at the helm of the Council. I wish you and your team every success in your mandate, as well as a calm and peaceful presidency. Spain would also like to thank France for its resolute and tireless commitment to the adoption of resolution 2279 (2016), as well as the other delegations for their always constructive contributions, made in a spirit of flexibility.

If the Security Council was able to adopt this resolution unanimously this afternoon it was because, beyond the differences we have, there are some fundamental objectives on which we all agree: the urgency of ending the violence afflicting Burundi for months and to return to the path of dialogue — a dialogue that must be genuine and inclusive, based on respect for the Constitution and the Arusha Agreement and open to all actors committed to a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

We hope that this resolution will contribute significantly to national, regional and international efforts to bring peace, stability and prosperity to the people of Burundi, for that is simply the whole of the aspiration of the Council. We will continue working to that end.

Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security

Council for the month of April, as well as to express our appreciation for Angola's presidency during the month of March.

My delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 2279 (2016). We consider today's decision to be the next important step towards the stabilization of the situation in Burundi. Our unity demonstrates the Council's readiness to take responsibility and to react in a timely and efficient manner.

The message to the Government of Burundi should be clear: it should respect, protect and guarantee all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all citizens of the country; and all those responsible for gross violations and abuses of human rights, as well as violations of international humanitarian law, in Burundi should be held responsible.

We welcome the active role of the African Union and of the East African Community in the mediation efforts. In that regard, we would like to underscore that every tool available to ensure the implementation of commitments in the area of human rights by all sides has to be applied in full. To that end, the cooperation of the Government of Burundi with all United Nations and African Union human rights observers, as well as with the United Nations independent investigation on Burundi established by the Human Rights Council last December, is of the utmost priority.

(*spoke in French*)

Taking into account the main role of the countries of the region in mediating and finding a lasting solution to the crisis in Burundi, we would like to underscore the need to increase the pressure by the international community on the Government of Burundi in order to set a concrete and precise timetable of steps to relaunch the inter-Burundian dialogue in a truly inclusive manner.

My delegation believes that the contribution of police is very important to increase the capacity of the United Nations to monitor the security situation and promote respect for human rights. At the same time, we would like to underscore that the effectiveness of that future presence will depend upon on the impartiality of the mandate and clear goals, as well as the availability of the necessary means to carry out its functions.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, and the Chinese delegation on assuming the presidency of the Security Council. I also thank you for convening us this evening.

The situation in Burundi is beyond fragile. The ongoing repression, harassment and violence against the legitimate political opposition, the closure of free and impartial media, and widespread impunity for human rights violations and abuses — including those involving killings and alleged sexual violence by security services against political opponents, members of civil society and others — continue. Almost a quarter of a million Burundians have fled the country since April 2015 out of fear for their lives, and countless more have been internally displaced. People do not flee in the hundreds of thousands unless there is a very serious problem.

Against that backdrop, let us be clear: progress will be measured by peace, and peace will come from genuine political dialogue that is inclusive. To date, while there have been opening ceremonies, the real discussions have not commenced. We strongly support former President Mkapa in his efforts to move the process forward and we urge that a date be scheduled for discussions to begin. Each day that this crisis continues makes it that much harder for Burundi to regain the progress it has achieved over the past decade, risking a much longer-term and much deadlier crisis.

While in our discussions some pointed to the release of a "significant number of prisoners", resolution 2279 (2016) does not do that. The resolution instead welcomes "the steps made by the Government of Burundi" towards that end and urges them to fulfil their commitments. The progress made by the Government of Burundi to date is woefully insufficient. There have been plenty of press releases, but not enough political prisoner releases. We acknowledge the Government's acts of clemency for prisoners who are old, under-aged or infirm, but that is not the same as releasing political prisoners, and they must begin to deliver on those important promises.

We have been promised that free media would be allowed to operate, but only two out of five banned outlets are today operating. It was agreed that 200 African Union (AU) human rights and military observers would be deployed, but today there are currently 32 human rights observers and 15 military observers on the ground in Burundi, and they do not have a memorandum of understanding with the Government.

Recognizing the enormity of those problems, today's action by the Security Council is indeed important. With this resolution, the Security Council expresses its support for the African Union's efforts in Burundi, including the deployment of the 200 AU human rights observers and military observers. We call on the Government of Burundi to cooperate fully to facilitate the implementation of the mandate of the human rights observers and military experts.

With this resolution, the Security Council endorses the East African Community-led, regionally mediated dialogue. Only such an inclusive and regionally mediated dialogue can resolve this crisis and restore stability to Burundi. We urge all stakeholders to expedite the resumption of the dialogue in pursuit of a peaceful and consensual path forward for Burundi.

With this resolution, the Security Council urges the Government of Burundi to deliver in reality what it has committed to in the press.

With this resolution, the Security Council has sent a strong message to the Government of Burundi and the opposition to cease all violence, refrain from provocation and commit to peacefully resolving this crisis through dialogue — a dialogue based on respect for the Arusha Agreement.

And with this resolution, we are today sending a more robust, larger international civilian presence into Burundi to advance political dialogue, security and the rule of law. We are also asking for options for the deployment of a police mission, which should include options on the deployment of formed police units, to Burundi to advance rule of law.

The United States appreciates the efforts the Security Council members and our colleagues made to find consensus on this important resolution.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

China believes that political dialogue is the only way out of the situation in Burundi. China welcomes the positive efforts by the Government of Burundi to safeguard the stability of the country and promote national reconciliation, and encourages all parties in Burundi to actively participate in dialogue and resolve their differences peacefully.

China has always supported Africa in resolving African issues in an African way and appreciates the constructive mediation efforts on this issue by the East African Community and other relevant regional and subregional organizations. The unanimous adoption of resolution 2279 (2016) by the Security Council signifies the strong support of the international community for the East African Community-led mediation and demonstrates the firm support of the international community for a political settlement for this issue. China hopes that by implementing resolution 2279 (2016) the relevant parties will fully respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Burundi, strengthen their consultation with the Government of Burundi and jointly agree on a solution so as to achieve peace, security, stability and development in Burundi at an early date.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Shingiro (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Mr. President, my delegation would like to congratulate you personally and your country, the People's Republic of China, for acceding to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. I would also like to thank you, Sir, for having organized this important meeting devoted to the adoption of resolution 2279 (2016), on Burundi, especially as it takes its place following resolution 2248 (2015), which remains very topical.

I would also like to thank all of the other members of the Security Council that have spared no effort to assist Burundians to find their own solutions to political issues that concern them. I would also thank you, Mr. President, for the great flexibility you have shown during several hours of intense negotiations, which reflects your awareness of the lofty responsibility you have to safeguard international peace and security, which is, of course, the main mission of the Council.

Without taking an exhaustive look at the entire resolution that has just been adopted, I would like to make a few general comments — constructive ones, of course — on certain passages of the text that are important for peacebuilding process in Burundi.

I would like to begin with the preambular part, which is dominated by the question of the protection of human rights and the promotion of the rule of law, and by

the fight against impunity in particular. My delegation takes note of the appeals of the Security Council on this matter and promises to do everything it can to ensure that this advice would be followed by concrete facts on the ground in an atmosphere of total transparency.

On this specific issue, however, I would like to recall that the Government of Burundi has always attached great importance to human rights issues. We have adopted a zero-tolerance policy with respect to human rights, and the National Independent Human Rights Commission is working day and night to take up this challenge. Despite the very tangible progress on the ground, we humbly acknowledge that there have been human rights violation here and there, as there have been elsewhere. We have set up a judicial commission of inquiry to shed light on certain allegations of human rights violations since the beginning of the uprising to the present day. Resolution 2279 (2016) refers to this in its preambular part and in paragraph 2.

We furthermore recall that the Government of Burundi has made the fight against impunity the centrepiece of its priorities, and all of this without taking into account political affiliations. We cooperate very closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to which we have given free access to our services for reasons of transparency. We have offered the same quality of cooperation with United Nations human rights experts who, as you know, Mr. President, visited Burundi from 1 to 8 March.

With respect to freedom of expression and civil society, I would like to inform Council members once again that Burundi has a great tradition of freedom of expression as well as a tradition of active civil society in the region, and we would like to strengthen this practice and make it permanent. That leads me to thank the Council for having acknowledged, through paragraph 4 of the current resolution, the recent good measures taken by the Government of Burundi with a view to easing political tensions and restoring confidence among the financial and technical partners of our country.

As is underscored in the resolution the Council has just adopted, we recently authorized the reopening of private radio stations that were destroyed in the wake of the attempted coup of 13 May 2015, namely, the Radio Isanganiro and Radio-Television Rema FM, which are both back on the air broadcasting freely throughout the national territory. Besides those stations, which have been authorized to resume their activities, the National Council of Communication also has authorized two private radio stations — Izere FM and Humuriza — and without forgetting, I would stress, that judicial proceedings against two civil society non-governmental organizations were lifted, namely, PARCEM and AJCB, which now have free access to their bank accounts. That is something new.

With respect to political dialogue, we reiterate our firm commitment to continuing an inclusive, frank and sincere inter-Burundian dialogue among the peaceful and clearly committed young men and women of the country, those from within the country as well as those in the diaspora, who are determined to find peaceful solutions to our disputes. We also welcome the fact that paragraph 5 of the resolution refers explicitly to the importance of conducting a dialogue with only non-violent actors, which automatically excludes the coup plotters who wanted to overthrow democratic institutions through unconstitutional means, which violates the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

From a regional point of view and within the East African Community, consultations are ongoing with the facilitation and with the region in order to come to an agreement — some delegations have pointed this out — on two important points, namely, who should take part in the dialogue in an objective way and what the agenda will be, that is, what will be discussed at the next session. Those are two very important issues. If the dialogue has taken some time, it is not because of the Government. We are ready to start even tomorrow. Just give us the date and the agenda, and we are ready to start and meet our compatriots. We therefore remain quite committed to the dialogue in good faith. As the Council is aware, the internal dynamics are very advanced under the leadership of the National Commission for the Inter-Burundian Dialogue, which has done an excellent job throughout the country so that everyone can have their say.

With regard to security, I confirm that it is generally good throughout the national territory and that citizens are going about their activities in calmly, except for some residual elements of the opposition who continue to throw grenades at peaceful citizens. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the fact that the Council has recognized the decrease in killings in Burundi and has condemned the use of force to achieve

political objectives, whatever its origins or its authors, including strong condemnation of the indiscriminate throwing of grenades at peaceful citizens. We hope that this message will be heard by those who remotely guide such acts from host countries abroad. I note in passing that no ideology or political struggle can justify such senseless acts that take the lives of women and children in our country.

Still on the subject of security, with regard to the desire to continue the disarmament process in transparency and full cooperation with our partners, the Government of Burundi agreed, before the high-level delegation of the African Union, to the deployment in Bujumbura of 100 human rights observers and 100 unarmed military observers to observe what we are doing. For us, transparency is a priority. If the observers are not all yet in Bujumbura, it is not because of the Government. The President made a firm commitment, and we are ready to receive them at any time. If there are administrative delays on the part of the other party that has to sign the memorandum of understanding, for Burundi's part we are prepared to do so at any time. It is a matter of improving the existing memorandum — merely a matter of changing the number of observers. Again, we are acting in good faith. We are not stalling.

With regard to cooperation with the United Nations, Burundi would once again like to reiterate before the Council its full cooperation with the country team and with the team of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Jamal Benomar. We take note of the offer of the contribution of police stipulated in paragraph 10 of resolution 2279 (2016), which will of course be determined in consultation with the Government of Burundi. My country remains available to the Secretary-General to discuss and agree upon the nature, size and tasks of the police presence in support the team of the special adviser envisaged in resolution 2248 (2015).

In that regard — and this is extremely important to emphasize — I recall that the primacy of the option of an un-armed international presence was one of the recommendations of the latest Summit of Heads of State of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa; of the the high-level delegation of the African Union made up of five Presidents that visited Bujumbura from 25 to 26 March; of the meeting of the ministerial committee of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region held on 10 February in Luanda; and of the Government of Burundi itself via its Parliament. All those actors have opposed an armed international, preferring instead the presence of human rights observers and unarmed military experts. That unarmed configuration, and I emphasize this, which is also the preference of the African Union, is what we expect to discuss in detail with the Secretariat in a spirit of openness and respect for national sovereignty.

With regard to acts of aggression from Rwanda, which several credible reports have established, including at the United Nations, my delegation welcomes the call on regional States in paragraph 8 of today's resolution to contribute to a peaceful resolution of the situation in Burundi and to refrain from supporting the activities of armed groups. The resolution also reminds all States of the region to respect the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region and the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Among other things, that Convention emphasizes the need to respect the civilian character of refugee camps — as recalled as well by the Secretary-General himself here on 21 March (see S/PV.7653) in the presence of several ministers from the region. We hope that Kigali will unequivocally hear that call by the Council so that that neighbouring country, with which we share so much, immediately ceases to facilitate the recruitment, training and arming of the negative forces that commit acts of aggression in our country. We also welcome the fact that paragraph 9 of the resolution also pertains to actors outside Burundian territory, including others in the region.

With regard to cooperation with our partners, we appreciate the fact that the Council pays particular attention to the issue in the preambular part of the resolution, notably by encouraging bilateral and multilateral partners and the Government of Burundi to continue their dialogue in order to create a favourable environment for a resumption of assistance to Burundi.

I would like to conclude by saying that my country of course welcomes that appeal. We remain very committed to make every effort to rectify the situation at the political and security levels, in the interests of the Burundian people and of the region.

The meeting rose at 7.45 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7665

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7665th meeting
Tuesday, 5 April 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Egypt	Mr. Mahmoud
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2016/281)

Letter dated 29 March 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/288)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2016/281)

Letter dated 29 March 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/288)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, invite the representative of Mali to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Diop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and African Integration of the Republic of Mali.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/281, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali. I wish also to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/288, which contains a letter dated 29 March 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to brief the Council on the situation in Mali, just a short time after the important visit that the Council carried out in Mali and in the West African subregion at the beginning of the month of March. I should like also to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and African Integration of the Republic of Mali, Mr. Abdoulaye Diop. I take this opportunity to convey to him the satisfaction of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at the excellent cooperation with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

As the members of the Security Council noted during their recent visit to Mali, and as is underscored by the report of the Secretary-General (S/2016/281), significant progress has been made in recent weeks in implementing the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. Carrying on from the consultative meeting of the Agreement Monitoring Committee, held in Algiers on 18 January under the auspices of the Algerian Foreign Minister, Mr. Lamamra, the Malian authorities made official on 19 January the establishment of two new regions, Taoudenni and Ménaka. On 27 February, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita called for a meeting in Bamako with the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA) and the Platform coalition of armed groups, during which the parties to the agreement announced that they had set an implementation timeline for March and April, with a focus on the establishment of interim authorities in the north, improving security conditions, cantonment and the swift implementation of the peace agreement provisions relating to preparations for local elections.

Following lengthy consultations between the Government and the signatory armed groups, which, incidentally, were expanded to civil society and political parties, on the process of the establishment of the authorities responsible for administration, municipalities, communal circles and the regions of the north during the interim period, the National Assembly adopted on 31 March a law modifying the territorial municipalities code. This was followed by the adoption of a decree on the modalities for implementation of the interim authorities in territorial municipalities.

All of these texts define the functioning of the transitional administrations, which will be composed of representatives of the Government, the CMA and the Platform, and will be limited to municipalities, communal circles and the regions of Gao, Kidal, Ménaka, Taoudenni and Timbuktu. This is therefore a decisive stage that should be welcomed. It is now up to the parties to implement this law as soon as possible and to make concrete progress on implementing other important clauses of the peace agreement, in particular on defence and security matters.

In order to fully cover all of these institutional developments, I wish also to commend the appointment on 23 March, following a consultation process with

the signatory groups, of a new Governor of Kidal, Mr. Ag Ahmadou. His arrival in Kidal will symbolize a gradual return of the State Administration. I should like to assure the Council that MINUSMA will spare no effort to facilitate the full implementation of all of these measures.

Although significant measures have been taken in recent weeks, in particular the establishment of committees on integration and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); a Government allocation for the pre-cantonment of signatory armed groups; the construction of the first three pre-cantonment sites and the beginning of work this week on five others, progress in the area of security forces remains too slow, given the security challenges in the north of Mali. Almost 10 months after the signing of the agreement in May, it is urgent to quickly make the Operational Coordination Mechanism functional and, above all, to begin the joint patrols, which will play a crucial role in securing the cantonment and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, in addition to making things visible to the population. I therefore appeal to the Government and to the signatory armed groups to create the conditions required to carry out those steps. As to the armed groups themselves, I call on them to provide without delay the list of their representatives to the integration and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration commission, as well as — no less important — the list of their fighters who are to be part of the cantonment process. In that regard as well, MINUSMA will continue to play its full role in facilitating the process as part of its good-offices mandate. I therefore urge the Government and the signatory armed groups to quickly set out an implementation timetable for all pending matters set out in the peace agreement.

When I previously briefed the Security Council (see S/PV.7600), I raised the alarm with regard to the worrying security situation in Mali. Each day that passes without the peace agreement being implemented is a day gained for extremist and terrorist groups, which are betting on the failure of the peace process in Mali and are indiscriminately targeting representatives of the Malian State, signatory groups and the international forces of Operation Barkhane and MINUSMA. In that regard, I should like to pay homage to the victims of the terrible attack by terrorist groups in Kidal on 12 February. Many Guinean peacekeepers died during that attack on our camp. I also pay tribute to the victims among Mali's defence and security forces, who paid a very heavy price in the face of repeated attacks by Ansar Eddine and the Al-Mourabitoun. We should also point out, as we say almost every day, that the delay in implementing the peace agreement and the ongoing insecurity also have an impact on intercommunal conflicts, which continue to increase, especially in the areas of Gao and Mopti, with sometimes alarming consequences for the civilian population.

Beyond the commitment and political will of the Government and the signatories to speed up the implementation of the agreement — which I commend and about which I have no doubt whatever — the challenge today has to do with trust among the parties, which we must further strengthen. As such, I regret that the Kidal forum, which was initially to bring together all the signatories to the agreement and which I had the honour to attend, was ultimately transformed into an internal meeting of the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad held from 28 to 30 March. However, given the conclusions of the meeting, there is hope that it paved the way for a strengthening of cohesion among the armed groups, as well as for their renewed commitment to the timely and full implementation of the peace agreement. The effective putting in place of interim authorities, which signals the return of State services in the north of the country, the launch, as I mentioned, of joint patrols and the cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes should constitute a key step in the gradual restoration of basic services, including health and education, and enable the most vulnerable populations to benefit from the peace dividend they await so fervently. We encourage the Government of Mali quickly to launch the preparatory process for the national reconciliation conference provided for in the peace agreement, which should contribute to a more inclusive peace process with regard to the concerns of other forces of the Malian nation.

The combination of increased insecurity in northern Mali, but also in the central region of Mopti, and the increase in terrorism in the subregion, as seen in the attacks in Ouagadougou at the end of last year and those in Grand Bassam, in Côte d'Ivoire, in mid-March should prompt us to pay greater attention to the state of the security threat in the entire West African subregion. In that regard, we should welcome the increased efforts by the Malian armed forces, in cooperation with the armies of neighbouring countries — including Burkina Faso, Mauritania and the Niger — as part of the regional

initiative by the group of five Sahelian countries and with the support of the French Operation Barkhane to conduct operations to reduce the influence of terrorist groups in the subregion. For its part, MINUSMA is intensely continuing its efforts for the upgrading of its contingents to increase their mobility and to further adapt their available capacities for intelligence and protection to respond to changing the threat to our facilities and all our personnel.

Faced with that threat, at a time when United Nations peacekeeping in West Africa is changing, the prevalence of terrorist groups and organized crime are latent threats to the stability of the subregion. In that regard, we are prepared to continue to explore with other actors, including the African Union, ways and means to strengthen cooperation among the countries of the subregion in terms of intelligence and border control and security, with a view to contribute to containing the expansion of the terrorist threat. I note that the efforts of the subregion have already allowed for the dismantling of some terrorist cells, as well as for the arrest by the Malian authorities of the leader of Ansar Eddine for the southern region, Souleymane Keita, as well as the bombing suspects in the attack at Grand Bassam. All of that, of couse, has been part of separate operations.

We must keep in mind that the non-permissive environment in which MINUSMA is deployed has its roots in deeper issues related to political and security governance in the West African subregion. That is why I would like to commend China's initiative, Mr. President, in organizing an open debate on April 25 on the issue of peacebuilding in West Africa, which I am certain will enable us to further consider together ways and means to respond in a more integrated and coordinated manner to all those new threats to peace and security in the subregion.

Finally, I take this opportunity to officially inform the Security Council that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has initiated a strategic review of MINUSMA. Over the next two months, we will focus on further reflections in our consultations with the Government of Mali and other partners. We will share the recommendations of the strategic review in the next report of the Secretary-General, whose publication is expected in late May, a month before the Mission's mandate comes to an end.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Minister Diop.

Mr. Diop (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to express to you, Mr. President, the satisfaction of the delegation of Mali at seeing your country, the People's Republic of China, preside over the Security Council this month. China is a friend of Mali and a long-time partner, to which we wish every success and pledge our full cooperation during its presidency. At the same time, I would like to congratulate Angola, also a friend of Mali, for its outstanding leadership of the Council during the previous month, one of the highlights of which was the field visit that took place from 4 to 9 March by the 15 members of the Council, who went to Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal. I welcome the positive results of the visit, and I reiterate the congratulations of my delegation to all Member States for the quality of the exchanges with all of the stakeholders in the peace process. Allow me also to pay tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his laudable ongoing efforts on behalf of international peace and security, in particular when it comes to resolving the crisis in Mali. I also extend my gratitude to his Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), our brother and friend Mahamat Saleh Annadif, with whom the Government of Mali has a very good relationship of cooperation. We look forward to that continuing in the future.

I am also pleased to commend the efforts of Algeria, which has been leading the international mediation and is Chair of the Agreement Monitoring Committee, as well as the efforts of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, France, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria, Chad and the United States of America. I also thank all countries that contribute troops to MINUSMA and would like to remember the Blue Helmets who have fallen in the line of duty and all victims of the crisis in Mali.

The delegation of Mali takes note of the report (S/2016/281) of the Secretary-General under consideration and would like to thank its friend, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his briefing and, above all, for his ongoing support for the peace efforts in Mali.

With regard to the peace process in Mali, the Security Council, as I already mentioned, carried out useful work during its field visit, as the visit allowed members to see at first-hand the progress achieved and the difficulties that remain, but also to listen and engage in an exchange with all stakeholders about their concerns and expectations. Those frank and direct interactions strengthened the conviction of the Government of Mali that it is up to the Malians themselves to take their destiny into their own hands and to commit resolutely to implementing the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali with the support of the international community.

The assurances given by the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, on 6 March, at the fruitful meeting he had with members of the Security Council echoed that spirit. Members will recall that on that occasion President Keita left no shadow of a doubt with regard to the willingness and determination of the Government of Mali to fully play its role to speed up the implementation of the peace agreement in an environment rid of the spectre of terrorism, violent extremism and all forms of transnational organized crime. Similarly, during the meeting between the Government of Mali and the Security Council delegation, on 5 March, the Ministers outlined the various measures taken by their Government within the framework of the implementation of the Agreement.

Members therefore have all the information about the evolution of the peace process in my country. Nonetheless, the current meeting on the review of the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Mali gives my delegation an opportunity to return to certain observations made by the Council during the meeting on the conclusions of that visit to the field, which are referred to in the current report under review. I am sure that all members noted some things during their visit. First, I am sure they noted the significant advances that have been made in the implementation of agreement, which are largely thanks to the leadership and personal efforts of the President of Mali. Secondly, I am sure that members also noted the resurgence in terrorist attacks, which are today the main obstacle to the implementation of the peace agreement. Thirdly, members also underscored the need to take into account the regional and transregional nature of the challenges that are confronting Mali. Finally, they recognized the incompatibility of MINUSMA's current mandate with its operating environment, as well as the Mission's operational shortcomings, in particular in terms of training and equipment. With regard to the last point, I would like to briefly recall that the Government of Mali, during its discussions with the Security Council delegation, outlined a series of actions whose undertaking would improve the position of MINUSMA by making it more proactive.

The recommendations of the Government of Mali were aimed at ensuring that MINUSMA operated in a more effective and efficient way and revolved around bringing together the Mission itself and the Malian defence and security forces, as well as regional initiatives, which will support all those efforts. The Malian Government's recommendations were also the subject of extensive discussions as part of the United Nations inter-agency strategic review mission for Mali, led by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. El-Ghassim Wane. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on his appointment to that important post. The review of the quarterly report, in June 2016, to which the conclusions of this review will be appended and which has been launched for the purpose of renewing MINUSMA's mandate, will offer us an opportunity to go into greater depth about the concerns that we have about MINUSMA.

At this juncture, I would like to recall our common view that MINUSMA, despite being almost entirely up to strength in terms of troops and police, is nonetheless struggling to fully assume its role of stabilizing the country and supporting the Government of Mali for the full implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation. Beyond the attacks targeting the civilian population and the Malian defence and security forces, the Mission itself is now the target of terrorist groups. The heavy toll of more than 80 Blue Helmets killed in just three years of the existence of the MINUSMA makes it, unfortunately, the deadliest peacekeeping operation currently. That explains why the Government of Mali believes a lot is riding on the renewal of the mandate of MINUSMA and why the mandate must take into account the current security context, which is marked by a resurgence and intensification of the terrorist threat.

The Government of Mali, commensurate with its responsibilities arising from the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation, has undertaken a series of actions focused on the following priority areas. First, in terms

of political and institutional reforms, and this is not an exhaustive list but I would like to underscore certain actions — and Mr. Ladsous touched on some of these in his own briefing — namely, the appointment, in January, of governors for the newly created regions of Taoudenni and Ménaka. I would also point out that, in March, a new governor was appointed for Kidal, which had been without state Government for approximately three years. I would like to make it clear that all three governors are from communities in northern Mali.

I also draw the Council's attention to the adoption by the Council of Ministers, on 24 February, of the draft bill and decree relating to the interim authorities called upon to manage the territorial collectivities, especially in the northern regions of Mali. I am pleased to announce that the National Assembly of Mali has just adopted, at its meeting on 31 March, the texts that were submitted by the Government. They are simply awaiting their enactment by the President and, above all, the appointment of the leadership of those interim authorities.

Allow me also to inform the Council that we have begun the constitutional review process by drawing up draft decrees and a timetable, especially to incorporate the provisions pertaining to the implementation of a second chamber, which is one of the key elements of the peace agreement.

There is also the issue of the holding of local and regional elections, which were postponed to foster a more inclusive approach. We hope the elections can be held as soon as possible, in particular following the establishment of the interim authorities and once the security situation on the ground has improved. We have also established and installed regional development agencies in all regions of Mali and in the district of Bamako.

Turning to the issue of defence and security, I draw members' attention to the effective establishment of bodies responsible for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as security sector reform initiatives. I also underscore the efforts undertaken by the Government of Mali to provide support for combatants from the signatory movements as a precursor to and during the effective start of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. I also refer to the identification of 24 sites to be prepared by MINUSMA and the start of construction on three other sites.

With regard to justice, national reconciliation and humanitarian efforts, I would like to note that basic social services have been relaunched in the north, where security conditions allow, with the cooperation of the Platform coalition of armed groups and the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad. In addition, the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission has begun its work. In order to improve its inclusivity and increase the representation of the signatory groups, the Government of Mali has adopted a decree increasing the number of commissioners from 15 to 25.

I should also note that steps have been taken to further strengthen trust among the parties, including through the release of prisoners. Under-Secretary-General Ladsous also touched on the very important issue of trust, and I think that significant steps have been taken to genuinely improve the atmosphere of calm understanding among the parties in Mali, all of which are now in a position to speak with one voice and continue with their commitment to achieving the comprehensive and complete implementation of the peace agreement. Another crucial issue that Mr. Ladsous mentioned is the organization of a national reconciliation conference by the end of the year so as to enable us to implement the provisions of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation as soon as possible. With regard to the establishment of an international commission of inquiry, I should emphasize that as long ago as July 2014 the Government of Mali sent a letter to the Secretary-General, who informed the Human Rights Council. We are still awaiting a response from the Secretary-General on the issue.

With regard to the bodies monitoring the agreement, I would also like to note that the Agreement Monitoring Committee has held regular meetings whose inclusivity has greatly improved in the wake of the integration into subcommittees of all the agreement's signatory groups, testified to at the Committee's seventh meeting on 9 and 10 March, which through the collaborative efforts of the Malian parties was able to settle the issue of its entities' representativeness under articles 10 and 24 of its internal rules and to adopt a budget. I should also highlight the establishment of a national mechanism for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Peace Agreement through the creation of a national coordination committee for its implementation, which is chaired by the Prime Minister and is also open to the signatory groups and civil society.

There are various aspects that I should note in the area of social, cultural and economic development, the first of which are the continuing efforts to carry out development activities on the ground, where security conditions permit, including through sectoral programmes and projects. With regard to the joint evaluation mission to the north, the Government has already passed on its comments to the Monitoring Committee.

We should also welcome the setting up within the Ministry of Economy and Finance of a team responsible for defining the financial architecture of the sustainable development fund for Mali's northern regions, with initial funding of almost CFAF300 billion, about €457 million, for the period from 2016 to 2018, representing the Government of Mali's peace contribution. I should emphasize the substantial increase in the State budget allocations for the implementation of the peace agreement in 2016, in the amount of €25 million, about €16.4 billion more than the previous year. In addition, on 24 March we held sectoral consultations in Bamako on transport infrastructure in the north. All the projects presented that were subjected to feasibility studies have received funding pledges, and we are making progress on that front. At this point I must urge our technical and financial partners to honour the commitments they made at the international conference for Mali's recovery and development held in Paris in October 2015.

Unfortunately, the optimism generated by the signing of the agreement and the start of its implementation is now somewhat tempered owing to some persistent threats and challenges, at the centre of which are terrorism, drug trafficking and every form of organized crime in the Sahelo-Saharan region. That was the unanimous conclusion reached during the Security Council's visit to Mali and the MINUSMA strategic assessment. As Mr. Ladsous emphasized just now, this is because the criminal activities of both the terrorist groups and the drug traffickers are aimed indiscriminately at peaceful civilians, the Malian defence and security forces and the international forces of MINUSMA and France's Operation Barkhane. The threats now extend to several countries in West Africa and the Sahel, as was unfortunately demonstrated by the recent terrorist attacks in January in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and in March in Grand Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire. I would like to reiterate to those nations and bereaved families the heartfelt condolences and solidarity of the people and the Government of Mali.

In combating terrorism, beyond our national efforts, we should place special emphasis on regional and international cooperation. Mali's defence and security forces are on the front lines of that fight. Sadly, they are still paying a heavy price, and we should commend their sacrifices and bravery. However, the complexity of the environment and the asymmetrical nature of the war mean that Mali's defence and security forces cannot cope with this threat, which concerns all of us, alone. They need support from their partners in logistics, intelligence and active cooperation aimed at strengthening their operational capacity for intervention on the ground. I should like to reiterate our appreciation to France for the Barkhane force's outstanding work in the fight against terrorism and for all the sacrifices it has made.

With regard to the mandatory, in fact essential, coordination of efforts to curb the recurring threats in West Africa and the Sahel, I would like to recall the initiatives of the Nouakchott Process and the Sahel Group of Five (G-5 Sahel), and to encourage the Security Council to support the operationalization of the G-5 Sahel intervention force, whose operating modalities were adopted on 4 March in N'Djamena at a meeting of the Group's Ministers of Defence. We also believe it is crucial to ensure that the international community can provide us with the necessary support for the establishment of an African Union intervention force for combating terrorism. In that regard, I welcome the recent African Union-United Nations joint assessment mission in Mali, whose conclusions, we hope, give new momentum to Africa's peace and security architecture, including the African Standby Force.

As the Security Council is aware, the region's general instability is related in large part to the continued deterioration of the political and security situation in Libya, which has direct consequences for the countries of the Sahel, including Mali. In that regard, we urge that the efforts to reach a political solution to the Libyan crisis continue. It is for that reason, which we share with the other States of the region, that my delegation is opposed to any kind of unilateral military intervention in our brother country of Libya. In that connection, I would like to remind the Council that the multidimensional crisis that rocked my country in 2012 followed the earlier military intervention in Libya.

With regard to the allegations of human rights violations mentioned in paragraph 31 of the Secretary-General's report, I would like to point out that

unfortunately the numbers cited do not enable us to distinguish the cases that may specifically be laid at the door of Mali's defence and security forces. With regard to the 265 detainees referred to in paragraph 32 of the report, checks carried out by our relevant services make it clear that the number bears no resemblance to the one available at the Ministry of Justice, which leads me again to invite MINUSMA to bring allegations of human rights violations to the Malian authorities within a reasonable time frame, in order to enable the Government of Mali to respond in a timely fashion.

Similarly, the observation in paragraph 36 of the report that

> "the Malian judicial authorities did not initiate criminal proceedings in relation to those human rights violations and abuses"

should, from our point of view, be tempered by the observation in paragraph 33 that

> "[m]ajor impediments to criminal proceedings included the lack of logistical resources for magistrates, insecurity preventing the judicial authorities from effectively carrying out investigations, especially in the north".

Faced with such obstacles, and as recommended by the Secretary-General, it is vital that the stabilization process be sped up through redeployment of the defence and security forces in northern Mali and that an environment more conducive to the implementation of the agreement be fostered.

Whatever the case, I would like to refer to paragraph 36 of the report and recall the nature of war crimes and crimes against humanity and the fact that there can be no amnesty for the perpetrators of those crimes, particularly crimes of sexual and other types of violence. Mali therefore reiterates its willingness to cooperate closely with all actors involved in the protection and defence of human rights. In the outline that I have just presented on the current situation, and in the light of the forthcoming renewal of MINUSMA's mandate, the Government of Mali would like to call to attention of the Security Council the need to make certain adjustments, first, with respect to adapting MINUSMA's mandate to the new security environment and, next, to speeding up the implementation process of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

Before concluding, I would like to strongly emphasize, as was done by the Secretary-General in his report, the need to speed up the implementation of the agreement as a whole, but in particular its provisions pertaining to political issues and security issues, which colour the proper execution of all other provisions of the agreement. Against that backdrop, and in the light of all that I have just said, it seems very clear that the Government of Mali has given strong impetus and taken significant steps towards the full implementation of the agreement. Such actions were publicly welcomed by the signatory movements to the agreement. The adoption, last week, of a law on interim authorities by the National Assembly is further eloquent proof.

The Government of Mali also believes that important and rapid progress is needed from the signatory movements on security issues, particularly by stepping up the process of cantonment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and the roll-out of joint patrols, and, as Under-Secretary-General Ladsous mentioned, by communicating the lists as soon as possible so that we can move forward in an area as sensitive as this one, that is to say, in a volatile security environment. Such measures will allow us to better pursue the recommendation of the Secretary-General directed to the Government that we strengthen the presence of the defence and security forces in the north so that, more broadly speaking, State authority may be extended throughout the national territory, in order for there to be better protection for persons and property. Such actions will also allow for the restoration of basic social services and create a more favourable environment for the peace process and for the activities of MINUSMA.

To that end, and in conclusion, I would like to reiterate the Government of Mali's determination to fully shoulder its responsibilities, and invite the Security Council to fully shoulder, in turn, its own responsibilities, namely, to get the parties, especially those that have not yet done so, to meet their commitments, and, most important, to step up the pace of change to allow us to stabilize Mali once and for all and strengthen peace and stability in the region, in the Sahel and hopefully well beyond.

I thank you, Mr. President, for the support that my country continues to enjoy from the Council, from the United Nations more generally and from the international community as a whole.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7666

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7666th meeting
Wednesday, 6 April 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Barro
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2016/268)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2016/268)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/268, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for this new opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Darfur and the activities of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The report of the Secretary-General (S/2016/268), which you have before you, Sir, provides an update and analysis of the political and security situation in Darfur. The report also charts the operational context in which UNAMID is currently functioning, as well as the activities being carried out by the mission within the framework of the implementation of its mandate. I would like to limit my remarks today to a few key points of this report, while also addressing some of the major developments that have occurred since its publication last month.

Since my previous briefing to the Council (see S/PV.7608), on 25 January 2016, the security situation in Darfur has essentially been marked by fighting between Government forces and those of the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA-Abdul Wahid) in the Jebel Marra region, which straddles three States of Darfur — North Darfur, Central Darfur and South Darfur. The fighting, whose warning signs and preparations were visible at the end of the rainy season last year, in October, intensified in mid-January this year following an apparent ambush by SLA-Abdul Wahid rebels against a convoy of Government forces in early January. In response to the attack, the Sudanese Government launched a large-scale — it must be said — military operation against rebel positions across the entire Jebel Marra region.

(*spoke in French*)

In late February, the Government announced that the military operation had been a success and made possible the dismantling of most of the bases of the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid, the surrender of hundreds of its fighters and some of its military leaders and the taking of control by Government forces of the Jebel Marra region, with the exception of some residual pockets of resistance. For its part, the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid contradicted that assessment and stated that its forces had repelled the Government offensive and that it continued to maintain a strong presence in Jebel Marra.

As noted in the report, it is difficult for us, at this stage, to establish an objective assessment of the fighting because of access restrictions imposed on UNAMID in Jebel Marra. However, from various sources of information we have received confirming this, what we can say at present is that clashes and air strikes are continuing. For instance, fighting was still reported to be taking place on 11 March in various localities north of Kass, South Darfur. Additional fighting took place Sorong, Central Darfur, on 17 and 23 March, as well as in Kadingo and Kwila on 19 March. We continue to receive reports of Government troop reinforcements in Golo and Guldo, Central Darfur, which by all accounts is the epicentre of clashes.

(*spoke in English*)

The security situation in other parts of Darfur remained fragile, with underlying tensions among and between local tribes over access to, the use and the management of land, water and other resources, leading to persistent outbreaks of intercommunal conflict despite the measures taken by the local authorities to contain the clashes. UNAMID continues to support the efforts by the Government to mediate these conflicts and consistently advocates for comprehensive measures that seek to address their root causes. But the

proliferation of small arms and the presence of various militia groups have meant an increase in criminality and various types of banditry against civilians. In spite of some improvements, the general weakness of the rule of law across Darfur results in such violations largely going unpunished.

The escalation of fighting in Jebel Marra has led to large-scale displacement, especially from mid-January to late March. Humanitarian organizations estimate that, as of 31 March, at least 138,000 people from Jebel Marra had been newly displaced in North, Central and South Darfur. Due to the access restrictions imposed by the Government, the exact number of civilian casualties from the recent wave of belligerence cannot yet be ascertained. Those restrictions, particularly in Central Darfur, have further prevented UNAMID and humanitarian actors from responding to needs of the displaced for protection and humanitarian support.

Despite the volatile security situation and the considerable challenges described in the report, UNAMID has remained steadfast in the implementation of its strategic priorities and in addressing key challenges to the implementation of its mandate. With the new outbreak of fighting in Jebel Marra, the mission has focused its efforts on ensuring the protection of civilians and the displaced. In that regard, UNAMID has established protective areas near displacement sites in Sortony, Kabkabiya, Tawila and Nertiti, where a total of approximately 103,000 persons have sought refuge. That led UNAMID to reinforce its military and police presence in the area and to intensify day-and-night patrols in order to maintain security and law and order. The mission has further been supporting the coordination of, and provided security and logistical support for, the delivery of humanitarian assistance, while also engaging the parties to immediately cease hostilities and for the Government to allow immediate, full and unhindered access.

Concurrent to that volatile security environment, the political process to settle the Darfur conflict remains polarized. The referendum on the administrative status of Darfur — to determine whether Darfur would become a single region or retain the current five subregional divisions as provided by the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur — is scheduled to take place from 11 to 13 April. The criteria for voter eligibility have proved to be controversial, as many stakeholders argue that all Darfuris should be allowed to participate in the voting. Some Sudanese political parties participating in the National Dialogue Conference in Khartoum have also expressed concern about what they describe as the unsuitable timing of the process given the current fighting and the additional displacement in Jebel Marra.

Despite several meetings that took place under the auspices of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, progress in political efforts to reach a sustainable resolution of the conflict through inclusive dialogue remained elusive. While the SLA-Abdul Wahid rejected the talks with the Government, the recent informal meetings between the Government and the Justice and equality Movement-Gibril Ibrahim and the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia, ended without an agreement. Following strategic consultations in Addis Ababa on 21 March on the cessation of hostilities in Darfur and the two Areas and on the way forward on the national dialogue, the Government signed a draft road map presented by the High-level Implementation Panel, while the representatives of the opposition refused and asked for more time, arguing that the road map endorsed the non-inclusive national dialogue taking place by qualifying it as "national". On 28 March, the Secretary-General welcomed the road map, which would constitute a valuable step towards ending the war, provide assistance to communities in need and enhance the environment for an inclusive national dialogue. Furthermore, the Secretary-General called on the Government to fully abide by the road map and urged the other parties to sign it as well.

Let me now turn briefly to the relationship between UNAMID and the Government of the Sudan. I would like to highlight the importance of a renewed partnership in that context. Since their arrival in the Sudan, both the Joint Special Representative and his Deputy have actively engaged with the Sudanese authorities, who have indicated their readiness to improve cooperation with the mission and to re-engage in discussions on the exit strategy.

On 22 March here in New York, the United Nations, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan held a strategic tripartite meeting, which I co-chaired with the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Mr. Smail Chergui, and the Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of the Sudan, Mr. Abd Elghani Elnaiem Awad Elkarim. In accordance with the outcome of the meeting, concrete steps by the Government are required in terms of lifting restrictions on the mission's operations, including customs clearances, visas and

access to Darfur overall, including conflict areas. I can report that some significant steps have been taken by the Government of the Sudan since then.

Next week, the African Union, the United Nations and the Government of the Sudan will resume their engagement on the exit strategy based on the parameters set by the Security Council and by the African Union Peace and Security Council. A critical step in that process will be the development of agreed criteria for measuring progress towards UNAMID's benchmarks as defined by resolution 2228 (2015) and the communiqués of the African Union Peace and Security Council of 22 June and 31 July 2015.

It is important that the members of the Council impress upon all the parties to the conflict in Darfur that a political solution remains the only viable option. The pursuit of political objectives through military means over the past decade has only contributed to the prolonged suffering of the civilian population. I therefore reiterate the call of the Secretary-General to the Government of the Sudan and the SLA/Abdul Wahid to cease hostilities immediately in Jebel Marra and to commit to peaceful negotiations, without preconditions.

The stability and recovery of the region is a time-bound process, and it should be based on durable solutions, including for the 2.6 million displaced persons. Security is an essential element in addressing this issue. Persistent insecurity, the presence of militia groups and the threat of the closure of camps and forced returns place internally displaced persons at risk of violence and harassment. In that regard, I am concerned by the Government's continued narrative that displaced persons would need to leave their camps. Such is not possible without durable solutions based on security and the necessary socioeconomic prerequisites for the internally displaced persons and returning refugees to begin new lives in their areas of origin or in whatever location they choose to settle. Within its protection of civilians mandate, UNAMID remains committed to supporting the Government of the Sudan in that regard.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to extend our congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. I wish also to congratulate your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Angola, for his wise and effective stewardship of the Council's proceedings last month. Furthermore, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2016/268). As the report is lengthy, I would ask for your indulgence, Sir, to take the time necessary to comment on its contents.

I had hoped that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the Secretariat would have assisted the Secretary General by avoiding the inclusion of certain matters. We are surprised to see certain paragraphs of the report that are in clear contradiction of incontestable facts. We see, in the assessment of the national dialogue currently under way in the Sudan, an obvious contradiction between certain paragraphs of the report and the statements made by the Head of the African Union, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, and the Joint African Union-United Nations Special Representative for Darfur — a situation that causes us consternation.

The report states that,

> "[w]ith the exception of the Popular Congress Party ... all major opposition parties ... as well as major Sudanese armed movements, continue to boycott the process." (*S/2016/268, para. 20*)

That conclusion reached in the report, which is presented in the name of the Secretary-General, runs counter to the statement delivered by the Secretary-General himself on 28 March, in which he invited those who had rejected the dialogue to join it, as well as the road map agreement proposed by the African Union High Level Implementation Panel. Not only does that necessitate denunciation, Sir, it also requires investigation. Our faith and trust in the Secretary-General requires that we call upon him to take this matter seriously.

The overwhelming majority of the Sudanese parties — approximately 81 of them — including the armed movements as well as the majority of the Sudanese people, who do not belong to any political party, took part in the national dialogue. The President of the Republic is obliged to implement the recommendations that the participants adopted unanimously — or nearly so, by a 90 per cent majority — as binding resolutions. Such an important matter cannot be subject to individual political whims because such would lead only to continued conflict. It would also give the armed

movements a license to continue to commit acts that lead to the deterioration of the security situation, and to target and kill civilians. In that connection, I would like to stress that the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW), as per paragraph 36 of the report, launched an attack with heavy weapons on 1 January against UNAMID forces near the Kutum region. We possess documented evidence that Abdul Wahid and his movement threatened to kill citizens in Jebel Marra if they refused to pay the ransom imposed on them under duress. We have audiovisual documentation of that incident, and can transmit that to you, Mr. President.

No dialogue anywhere in the world should serve as an instrument for criminals. Regretfully, we note that all noble endeavours being made to overcome infighting in Darfur, including the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, which belongs to the United Nations and the entire international community, including the national dialogue, are being sacrificed and questioned. That should — rather must — come to an end.

Most of the contents of this report visibly and indelibly clash with the conclusions of the two technical meetings between the Government of the Sudan and UNAMID, held in Khartoum on 13 January and 23 February. That leads us to demand complete transparency with regard to the preparation of this report. The offices of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support ought to advise us on the stages of preparation of the report, as well as on the role of the Secretariat in New York. That is the only way to eliminate those contradictions.

Sir, you have already seen how the practical agreement on the exit strategy elaborated by the joint tripartite panel composed of the Government of the Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations has been thwarted here in New York. In the light of such evidence, you would excuse us, Sir, if we felt that there is a hidden agenda behind the continued presence of UNAMID that is contrary to the provisions of resolution 1769 (2007), which authorized and mandated its establishment.

Throughout Darfur, large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have managed to return to their villages and to cultivate and harvest their crops. To date, 300 IDPs have returned to their places of origin, and preparations are under way for the return of 100,000 IDPs to their villages in East and West Darfur. I should like briefly to shed light on the displacement of citizens as a result of armed Abdul Wahid movement activity in the area of Jebel Marra, which is located next to two other areas in West Darfur. The report states that there was displacement from that region. Unfortunately, while the report refers to an area — Darfur — that is equal in size to the Republic of France, it makes no mention whatsoever of the cases of repatriation to which I have just referred.

With regard to Jebel Marra, by way of example, we would like to recall that in a statement on 18 February, the United States Department of State asserted that initial attacks by the rebel Abdul Wahid movement had prompted a response by the Sudanese armed forces. Control by Abdul Wahid over the livelihoods of Sudanese citizens in Jebel Marra has ended, and the roads have been opened between Jebel Marra and other main areas in Darfur as well as other parts of the Sudan. For the first time in 13 years, primary-school students sat for general examinations. Levies have ceased to be paid. So I would like to know how this could possibly clash with the objectives of the United Nations. How does this run counter to international law and its categorical provisions, and how does this contravene the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur? Is there any cogent justification for such a report to place the Government of the Sudan, whose people exercise their sovereignty through it, on a par with an armed movement that uses terrorism and violence to achieve its political goals, and invite both of them to seek a peaceful settlement?

We categorically reject the contents of paragraph 16 of the report, on the Sudanese judiciary. The Sudanese judiciary has taken a number of exceptional measures with regard to the five states of Darfur. It redeployed judges in the municipalities that had suffered from insecurity. It also carried out a project involving a prosecutor for each municipality, with the intent of extending justice throughout Darfur. The judiciary cooperated with UNAMID and provided it with information and statistics as per the contents of paragraph 63 of the report.

This could be a perfect opportunity for the Council to ensure that UNAMID does not allow its personnel to enjoy impunity in the criminal cases that we reported to them by memorandums from the Permanent Mission of the Sudan in New York, as well as in the briefings we made to the UNAMID representative at our last two meetings in Khartoum, in January and February. We do not want to address this any further. However, if the

Department of Peacekeeping Operations asks us to do so, we will definitely comply.

We wish to express our concern over the frequent references contained in the report to the racial dimension of the conflict in Darfur. This can only lead to interference and to the fuelling and intensifying of feelings of hatred. All the people of Darfur without exception suffer from the horrendous climate degradation afflicting Africa's western coasts up to the Sudan. Along the same lines, the conflict is integrally connected with the various means of livelihood. For instance, according to the report, shepherds are fighting with farmers.

Here we would like to thank the European Union for its recently announced endeavours to cooperate with the Government of the Sudan with a view to achieving stability, particularly in Darfur. That is why we believe that the negative references contained in the report stand in the way of accomplishing that goal and only deepen the conflict.

In conclusion, despite the inaccurate information contained in many of the report's paragraphs, it cannot avoid mentioning the positive developments emanating from the conclusion and implementation of the Doha peace agreement, and does so in the following paragraphs.

First, in paragraph 2, it points to the decrease in intercommunal conflicts; secondly, in paragraph 35, it mentions the reduction in the number of criminal attacks and the increasing coordination between security agencies and UNAMID in pursuing the perpetrators of attacks against UNAMID; thirdly, in paragraph 40, it refers to the release of all containers in Port Sudan by 29 February.

Here we would like to make an important remark: that progress in releasing the containers is contingent upon the resumption of technical cooperation in Khartoum and the regular holding of technical meetings between the relevant Government organs and UNAMID in Khartoum, which we requested last year upon reviewing UNAMID's third report for 2015.

Fourthly, paragraph 41 notes that criminal attacks against humanitarian organizations decreased to a great extent during the reporting period; fifthly, paragraph 56 touches on efforts to protect human rights; and sixthly, and lastly, the national human rights commission is setting up branches in the states of Darfur.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our meeting on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7667

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7667th meeting
Thursday, 7 April 2016, 1.25 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Egypt	Mr. Mahmoud
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Akahori
	Malaysia	Mr. Abdul Razak
	New Zealand	Mr. Walbridge
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. Gasso Matoses
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-09832 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 1.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/322, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2280 (2016).

Following consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council recalls its intention to review progress on steps outlined in its presidential statement S/PRST/2016/1, of 17 March 2016. The Security Council welcomes that some progress was made on the steps outlined in S/PRST/2016/1, including progress on implementation of the Juba security arrangements, including the return of some members of the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition to Juba, South Sudan. The Security Council regrets, nonetheless, that the steps outlined in S/PRST/2016/1 were not fully met and strongly urges all parties to complete those steps and to fully implement the 'Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan'. The Security Council expresses its intention to review progress achieved on the steps outlined in S/PRST/2016/1 by 30 April 2016.

"The Security Council reaffirms its unwavering support for the people of South Sudan."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2016/3.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7668

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 April 2016

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 7668th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 12 April 2016, at 9.45 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 12 April 2016, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 7668th meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

"The President invited Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in the meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing by Mr. Ladsous.

"Members of the Council, Mr. Ladsous and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

16-06007 (E) 130416

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United Nations S/PV.7669

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7669th meeting
Tuesday, 12 April 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Letter dated 15 March 2016 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/254)

Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2016/297)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-10267 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Letter dated 15 March 2016 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/254)

Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2016/297)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under- Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/254, which contains a letter dated 15 March 2016 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I wish to also draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/297, containing the special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Ladsous and by His Excellency Mr. Elbio Rosselli, Permanent Representative of Uruguay, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): Council members will recall that in its report last year (see S/2015/446), the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations indicated that the peacekeeping operations of recent years have tended to last longer than in the past and that it is therefore all the more important to conclude their various stages as soon as conditions allowed. It is therefore my pleasure to present the special report of the Secretary General of March 31 on the Côte D'Ivoire (S/2016/297), in which he submits to the Council his proposals with respect to the conclusion of the peacekeeping phase in that country.

I welcome in particular the fact that since the finalization of the report last month, the Government of Côte D'Ivoire has continued to pursue reforms allowing for the expansion of the political space and the strengthening of unity and national cohesion. For example, last week the Government of Côte d'Ivoire adopted a bill on the status of the political opposition, which the opposition had long called for. The bill establishes the post of opposition leader with the rank of Minister of State, sets the rules and procedures for his or her designation, and — importantly — provides public funding for political parties. The opposition leader will be the candidate or the leader of the party or political grouping that had come in second in the most recent presidential election. In this case, that would be Mr. Pascal Affi N'Guessan, leader of the Front populaire ivoirien.

Meanwhile, discussions are under way to hold a constitutional referendum towards the end of the year for the adoption of a new constitution that would better reflect the evolution of the socio-political context in Côte d'Ivoire over the past decade. The amendments under consideration include the question of the nationality of the candidates in the presidential elections and the establishment of the post of Vice-President. The Independent Electoral Commission, for its part, has established a committee to review the redistricting proposals called for by the political parties of the opposition in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Although the security situation is more or less stable, there are still several weak points, such as those highlighted in the special report that has been submitted to the Council today, including intracommunal conflicts in some regions of the country and military threats in the south-east. The country is riven with pockets of tension, in particular in the Boukani region in the north-east of Côte d'Ivoire, where violent clashes broke out on the night of 23 to 24 March between herders and farmers in Bouna and led to the deaths of 30 individuals and a massive displacement of more than 2,000 persons,

mainly women, children and the elderly. The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) deployed a detachment of its quick-reaction force to the town of Bouna to participate in protection of civilian efforts and to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Mindaoudou, accompanied by members of the Ivorian Government, visited the region and called for calm and restraint and made it clear that the path of dialogue should be followed in order to peacefully manage such clashes.

I must also point out that the relationship between the Ivorian security forces and the population remains a source of concern. For example, on 28 March there was an attack on the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI) by unidentified individuals near Tabou in the south-west, which resulted in the injury of two FRCI soldiers.

Following the terrorist attacks in Grand-Bassam on 13 March — for the commission of which Al-Mourabitoun, a group based in northern Mali and affiliated with Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, claimed responsibility — the Government took proactive measures to identify and bring to justice those responsible for those attacks. The Government also launched criminal investigations and arrested the alleged attackers. At the same time, the Government of Mali, in close cooperation with the Ivorian Government, arrested two alleged assailants.

It is worth noting that, faced with these terrorist threats, the Governments of the subregion have decided to step up their cooperation at the subregional level as part of their common fight against terrorism and violent extremism. Last week, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal convened a quadripartite meeting of ministers responsible for security. During the meeting, they established a security platform and adopted a series of measures intended to prevent terrorist attacks. The ministers also decided to pool their efforts and to strengthen the links among their security services. Four days after the attack in Grand-Bassam, the Governments of Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, the forces of UNOCI and the representatives of the United Nations Mission in Liberia held a quadripartite meeting in order to support the strengthening of border security cooperation between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

In general, since the post-election crisis that shook Côte d'Ivoire in late 2010 and early 2011, tangible progress has been made on all fronts. We have seen significant headway made at the political level, especially in terms of political dialogue, even though there is much to do in order to establish national reconciliation and social cohesion. There has also been notable progress in strengthening the legal system and efforts to respect human rights. The economy of Côte d'Ivoire has also undergone a remarkable transition, characterized by a rapid and sustained economic recovery and a general increase in production rates, with a gross domestic product in double digits in recent years. We welcome the Government's commitment to translating this economic recovery into a better standard of living for its people and to ensuring that the benefits of its growth are shared.

It must be reiterated that the country's security situation remains fragile and characterized by the presence of militias and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Therefore, the full re-establishment of the rule of law and a strong security environment throughout the country is still a challenge to be overcome. However, I also note that the stabilization seen throughout the country has enabled many displaced persons and refugees to return to Côte d'Ivoire, and indeed the country has avoided a humanitarian crisis. There may be some remaining needs and pockets of vulnerability here and there, but there is no humanitarian crisis in Côte d'Ivoire.

(*spoke in English*)

Later this year, two significant political processes will be launched. The first is the national referendum, which I referred to earlier, and the second is the legislative elections. All political stakeholders have expressed their intention to participate, provided that conditions are in place to ensure the credibility and the legitimacy of the process. Additionally, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire expressed confidence when it received our strategic review team. That review is the basis for the report before the Council. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire expressed confidence that national security forces are now fully competent to secure those sensitive processes without security support from UNOCI.

Taking into account the situation in the country and our assessment of the positive trajectory of Côte d'Ivoire, the Secretary-General recommends that UNOCI be extended for a final period, until 30 June 2017. By 30 April 2017, UNOCI should have a streamlined, prioritized mandate focused on the tasks

that are most essential for consolidating peace, as detailed in the report.

The Secretary-General also recommends a final phase of the drawdown of UNOCI's military and police components, which would be reduced to 2,000 and 670 personnel, respectively, in the coming months. During the last year of their deployment, the troops and formed police units of UNOCI would support the Ivorian authorities in protecting the population in the event of incidents that could threaten a strategic reversal of its stability, while individual police officers and military observers would continue to provide operational and command-level mentoring and advice to their national counterparts.

All UNOCI military and police personnel and the vast majority of civilian personnel would leave Côte d'Ivoire by 30 April 2017 and the full closure of the Mission would occur by 30 June 2017. Given the positive trend in Côte d'Ivoire, the Secretary-General does not recommend the establishment of a successor United Nations mission there. It is therefore even more essential that every effort be made to ensure a seamless transition from peacekeeping during the next 14 months.

Over the course of its final year, UNOCI will prioritize the handover of its priority tasks to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations country team. Therefore, we are exploring options for engaging the country team in the mandated tasks of UNOCI while the Mission is still deployed and supported by UNOCI's budget, in keeping with the recommendations of the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. It would also be important for other partners to be closely associated in the exit strategy of UNOCI. We are therefore exploring options for setting up a transition mechanism that would involve all the stakeholders, including the Government, the United Nations, regional organizations, donors and other partners in the transformation of the United Nations engagement in the country.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, I would say that UNOCI has made considerable progress since its deployment in April 2004, 12 years ago. The country is currently firmly anchored on the path of peace, stability and economic recovery. I want to commend and pay tribute to the Ivorian people's determination to move forward in building a stable and prosperous country. Congratulations are also in order in particular for President Alassane Ouattara, for his determined leadership and for his tireless efforts to build peace and promote democracy and the rule of law at a very crucial time in the country's history. I would also like to thank the Council for the key role it has played, including through the deployment of UNOCI and through its political support for our Mission at all levels. In the same vein, we think it important to thank our regional and subregional partners — the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union — and our many bilateral partners for the constructive roles they have played through the years in Côte d'Ivoire and its region.

Côte d'Ivoire's trajectory is a positive one. In my opinion, it would be prudent to wind up the current phase of our collective commitment represented by a peacekeeping mission in the country; in other words, the Mission needs to be drawn down. I therefore welcome the fact that the Security Council is ready to make a determination in the near future that the situation in Côte d'Ivoire is no longer a threat to regional peace and security and that it is open to defining the future role of United Nations in Côte d'Ivoire in order to uphold all efforts to build peace, stability and democracy in the country and the surrounding region.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Rosselli.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased to address the members of the Council in my capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire.

At the outset, I would like to summarize the main findings in the final report of the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire pursuant to paragraph 27 of Security Council resolution 2219 (2015), contained in document S/2016/254, and a review of the Group's findings arising from the informal consultations the Committee held on 11 March.

The Group highlighted that Côte d'Ivoire achieved important progress with regard to the overall stabilization of the country since the end of the post-election crisis in 2010-2011. It noted the good cooperation of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire throughout its mandate. It also recognized that the sanctions regime, since it was established in 2004, has succeeded in preventing the import of heavy weapons systems, including combat

aircraft and tanks, and the escalation of the conflict. The political and security situation in the country is stable and, in the period from 14 June 2015 and 22 February 2016, the Group identified only one violation of the arms embargo, with respect to night vision devices, a violation that Côte d'Ivoire subsequently disclosed to the Committee, showing that its compliance with the sanctions regime has improved dramatically.

The Group highlighted the positive developments in the country, the success of the presidential elections of October 2015 and the role of the sanctions regime, which was positively reviewed in the past, taking into account the progress made. However, the Group did express concern about the significant quantities of arms and ammunition that remain beyond the control of the Ivorian authorities. The Group emphasized that more efforts need to be made by the Ivorian authorities to control unregistered weapons and ammunition and that there is a need to address major issues including the improvement of the Ivorian security forces' functionality, dealing with former zone commanders and the integration of ex-combatants.

The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, which ended on 30 June 2015, was an important achievement for the stabilization process. The Group deemed it only partially successful, given that at least 16,500 ex-combatants still need to be fully reintegrated, and large quantities of weapons and ammunition remain unaccounted for. Although significant progress was made with regard to the security sector reform process, the Ivorian security forces continue face challenges. The former zone commanders, who occupy key roles in the Côte d'Ivoire security apparatus, continue to have access to private assets, financial resources and weapons.

With respect to weapons, the Group acknowledged the progress made in the cooperation with the Ivorian authorities, who gave the Group access to military cantonments and allowed it to conduct inspections. The Group continued to identify and document materiel acquired by the Forces Nouvelles in the immediate aftermath of the crisis of 2010-2011 in violation of the arms embargo. In this context, the Group expressed concern that such materiel could be diverted to armed and terrorist groups such as Ansar Dine and Boko Haram.

On the issue of customs and transport, the Group noted progress in the redeployment of the customs administration, but also highlighted the need to develop the capacity of the customs administration to monitor effectively cross-border-related traffic, implement a comprehensive and coordinated border-management strategy and provide adequate training, personnel, equipment and infrastructure. As a result of capacity shortfalls, large quantities of goods, including natural resources, cross the borders of Côte d'Ivoire without customs control.

In terms of natural resources, the Group referred to positive developments in the fight against the smuggling of cotton, cashew nuts, coffee and cocoa in the east and north of the country. Despite the commendable efforts of the Government, the smuggling of diamonds, artisanal gold, coffee and cocoa in the west of the country continues. In particular, the Group expressed concern that illegal gold mining in northern Côte d'Ivoire, along the border with Mali, could pose a threat if used to finance terrorism. It is important to underline that, although the diamond embargo was lifted almost two years ago, at present large quantities of Ivorian rough diamonds production are smuggled outside the legal chain of commerce certified through the Kimberley Process.

With regard to finances and individual sanctions, the Group acknowledged the Government's efforts to dismantle illegal taxation networks, reduce the number of checkpoints and prevent incidents of racketeering. Nevertheless, the Group ascertained that illegal checkpoints continued to exist, particularly on secondary roads and in border areas. The Group expressed concern about the non-application of the asset freeze and travel ban, by both Côte d'Ivoire and the countries of the region since they were first put into effect in February 2006. In the ensuing discussion, some Committee members acknowledged the progress made by Côte d'Ivoire and expressed their support for the lifting the sanctions measures targeting the country, while others expressed concern about the challenges the country is continuing to face.

Finally, the recommendations contained in the final report of the Group of Experts are still under consideration by the members of the Committee.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ambassador Rosselli for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bouah-Kamon (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to convey to you, Mr. President, my sincere and warm congratulations on China's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. I am confident that your experience and leadership will be valuable assets when heading up the work of the Council work during this period. I would like to thank the Security Council for this platform to discuss issues pertaining to the development of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

Once again, I take the opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, Ms. Aichatou Mindaoudou, and her team for their outstanding work in collaboration with the Ivorian authorities and the French forces in Côte d'Ivoire.

In referring to the progress made in Côte d'Ivoire in his December 2015 report on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the Secretary-General stressed that

> "the successful conduct of the presidential election is the most powerful demonstration of the progress made in Côte d'Ivoire" (*S/2015/940, para. 89*).

He went on to indicate his optimism about the country's future. Three months after that report, it is with the same confidence and conviction that I take the floor today before the Council to say that Côte d'Ivoire is determined and will continue its march forward.

Following the successful presidential election, a new Government was set up and given specific new tasks focused on national reconciliation, social cohesion, good governance, the improvement of living conditions and the people's purchasing power, the promotion of youth employment and equal justice for all. Putting words into action, the President of the Republic and the Government have since undertaken a wide range of actions. After his re-election, the President of the Republic undertook consultations with an important sector of society, including traditional kings and chiefs, religious leaders, the National Commission for Reconciliation and Compensation of Victims of the Ivorian crises and the Front populaire ivoirien, the main opposition party.

I would like to take this opportunity to also inform the Council that, in the context of the Head of State's resolve to enable all political actors to participate actively in the life of the nation, the Ivorian Government has decided to promote the candidate who came in second in October's presidential election, the head of the opposition, to the position of Minister of State.

The President of the Republic, convinced that national reconciliation and social cohesion are essential to laying the foundations of a unified nation, and echoing the wishes expressed during consultations, has taken several important steps, including the provisional release of several individuals detained during the post-election crisis who were awaiting trial, the unfreezing of the accounts of several opposition figures, the voluntary return of several exiles from Liberia, the announcement of the establishment of a high authority for rural land ownership, as well as the revision of the Constitution. That is in order to remove all conflicting elements in the fundamental law and to strengthen State institutions.

In addition to national reconciliation, security also remains key to stability and peace. As such, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform processes have attracted the attention of the Government and partners. There has been an implementation rate of 94 per cent for the former, and promising results for the latter. Efforts continue, as indicated in the Government's latest report on security sector reform and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, which was conveyed to the Sanctions Committee in March. In particular, the adoption of a law on military programming 2016-2020 and a law on programming domestic security forces 2016-2020, and the establishment of the coordination, monitoring and reintegration cell were undertaken in order to take control of the residual activities of the former Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Authority.

Unfortunately, the cowardly and heinous terrorist attack suffered by innocent people in Grand-Bassam on 13 March reminds us of our duty to be vigilant and alert at all times. I would like to once again honour the memory of all those who were so cruelly torn from their families and loved ones. On behalf of the Ivorian Government, I take this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude to all countries and friendly institutions that lent their support during the ordeal that my country went through.

Far from being a discouraging factor, that unfortunate situation has only served to dramatically increase the resolute will of the Ivorian Government to

adopt, at the national, regional and international levels, measures to strengthen security, in particular with regard to the domestic deployment of security forces in all strategic sites and public areas, as rightly identified in the report of the Secretary-General. I would therefore reiterate once again the Ivorian Government's request for the total lifting of all sanctions on both individuals and weapons to Côte d'Ivoire, in particular to enable the appropriate equipment to reach our defence and security forces, to better control our borders — particularly in the west — and to promote effective military cooperation with friendly neighbouring countries so as to enable the national security forces to fulfil their sovereign duties.

With regard to the issue of justice and the human rights situation, the credo of the President of the Republic has always been zero tolerance for impunity. That inclination for equal justice for all resulted, during the establishment of the last Government, in the creation of new ministries for rights and civil liberties, solidarity and social cohesion, and for the compensation of victims. Proceedings against people of all political persuasions have been and will be brought progressively, based on the independence of the judicial system. The ability of Ivorian justice to henceforth handle its duties led the Head of State to affirm that from this point forward, no other Ivorian citizen would be handed over to the International Criminal Court.

The Government's programme of action also provides, as mentioned earlier, an important place for the promotion of youth employment because of the role that young people can play not only in economic growth, but also in the restoration and consolidation of peace. My delegation welcomes the actions taken on the ground by the Peacebuilding Office, alongside the Ivorian Government, through two priority plans for peacebuilding and the cross-border cooperation programme between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

My delegation welcomes the fact that most of the progress achieved by the Ivorian Government in terms of stabilization, social well-being and lasting peace was mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General. My delegation takes note of that report and endorses the proposals seeking to extend for one last time UNOCI's mandate before its full drawdown on 30 June 2017. My Government hopes that the transitional assistance phase will give high priority to training and assisting the Ivorian defence and security forces, as well as to preparing the United Nations country team so as to ensure a smooth handover to the Ivorian Government.

It is to be noted that tremendous ongoing and continuous progress has been made, especially if we consider where we started from. My Government will continue its efforts to overcome any residual and emerging challenges. To that end, my country does indeed warrant encouragement and support from by the Council and the international community.

Before concluding, I should like to say that the commitment of the United Nations to Côte d'Ivoire under Chapter VII of the Charter represents for numerous observers a real success story that should go down in the history of our institution's peacekeeping operations throughout the world. The Council, the Secretary-General, friendly countries, the international community and the Ivorian Government should be extremely proud of the work that has been done and the major successes we have achieved. I would therefore like to convey on behalf of my Government my country's esteem for and gratitude to all of the stakeholders that I have just mentioned for their involvement and their belief in a Côte d'Ivoire that is based on peace and progress.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7670

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7670th meeting
Thursday, 14 April 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Countering terrorism

Letter dated 1 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/306)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Countering terrorism

Letter dated 1 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/306)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following to participate in this meeting: His Excellency Mr. João Vale de Almeida, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; His Excellency Mr. Téte António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations; and His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Fathalla, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations.

I propose that the Council invite the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations to participate in the meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/306, which contains a letter dated 1 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and to give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: I thank His Excellency Ambassador Liu Jieyi, President of the Security Council, for convening today's open debate on countering terrorism. It is clear that both terrorism and the violent extremism that can be conducive to it are at the top of the international agenda. I have just returned from Switzerland, where, together with Swiss Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter, I co-chaired the Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism. It was encouraging that many ministers and heads of regional and United Nations organizations, as well as civil society, came together to focus on solutions.

Two weeks ago, the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., adopted an important action plan in support of the key role that the United Nations can play in mitigating the threat and managing the response to the possible use by terrorists of nuclear, chemical, biological and radiological materials. Recent attacks around the world have destroyed lives, heightened fear and defied all norms of international law and our common humanity. Terrorism and violent extremism are global threats, transcending cultures and geopolitical boundaries. They should not be associated with any one religion, nationality or ethnic group.

While recognizing the importance of measures to counter terrorism, we also need to engage earlier and address the drivers of violent extremism. We know that violent extremism flourishes when groups are marginalized, political space shrinks, human rights are abused and people lack prospects and meaning in their lives. My Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism asks each country to develop a national plan that engages key communities and focuses on conflict prevention. The Plan also calls for the resolution of long-standing conflicts, which would give hope to those enduring oppression and eradicate the breeding grounds of violent extremism and terrorism.

Da'esh is adept at raising funds through nefarious activities and has shown an ability to radicalize and recruit disaffected youth, including women and girls, through strategies involving the Internet and social media. More than 30,000 people from all over the world have joined Da'esh's campaigns in Iraq and Syria.

These foreign terrorist fighters also pose a significant security threat to their home or third countries when they return.

We need to focus on implementing the relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015), and other resolutions and measures that sanction terrorist groups and individuals. We also need to implement all four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a comprehensive and balanced manner, recognizing that security and respect for human rights are mutually reinforcing. Member States need to take more concrete steps to stop fundraising through the smuggling of oil and gas, the illicit trade in cultural artefacts, kidnapping for ransom and donations from abroad.

We must also curtail the ability to abuse and misuse the Internet and social media to radicalize and recruit young people by identifying global and regional solutions that involve Governments, private enterprise and civil society. Strategies to counter the threat of online radicalization will also require legislative and law enforcement measures at the national level. We also need an effective approach to strategic communications, moving beyond counter-narratives to reinforcing the values of peace and tolerance. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre has made this a priority area in its new five-year programme.

To stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, we need to intervene at all stages — from their initial radicalization to their travel and return. Resolution 2178 (2014) called on all Member States to cooperate in this effort and, at the request of the Security Council, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) developed the United Nations Foreign Terrorist Fighters Capacity-Building Implementation Plan, which includes 37 mutually reinforcing project proposals to be carried out by 12 CTITF entities. The Security Council also called on Member States to provide the needed financial assistance. While the Counter-Terrorism Centre will support several of these projects with catalytic funding, more funding will be required for implementation.

We must also be sure that our approaches to preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism respect our shared values, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights and humanitarian law. Too often, this basic understanding has been broken or ignored. We must also have the courage to address certain difficult situations, such as the support that violent extremists and terrorists may receive — directly, indirectly and perhaps even unintentionally — from Governments. We must also recognize that, too often, Government counter-terror strategies are so heavy-handed and discriminatory that they end up being counterproductive, generating further alienation among targeted communities and even more terrorists than there were beforehand.

Through the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and the Capacity-Building Implementation Plan, the United Nations system has come together through an all-of-United Nations approach to provide support to Member States in their struggle. As we look ahead to this year's General Assembly review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy on its tenth anniversary, I hope that Member States will find consensus on a strong outcome resolution that reinforces international unity in the face of the divisions that terrorist groups and violent extremists seek to create.

The Security Council has a key role to play, and I look forward to continuing our shared efforts to address this global menace.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to thank China for having convened this very important debate at a time when the world and humankind as a whole are facing the very serious challenge posed by the threat of abject terrorism.

Egypt has had broad experience in fighting terrorism since the 1920s, and we therefore reiterate the importance of adopting a global approach to that struggle. We must address all the causes of terrorism and extremism that unleash violence. These causes may be political, economic, social or ideological, including Islamophobia, or linked to policies that exacerbate marginalization, race-based discrimination and ethnic alienation in certain countries. Another cause is the ongoing foreign occupation that violates human rights, annexes territory and tramples upon the dignity of people living under occupation. Other issues remain unresolved.

Furthermore, a global approach also encompasses the fight against all terrorist organizations or groups, wherever they may be, without distinction and within the framework of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We have to bear in mind that those terrorist groups adopted the same ideology and approach, based on the use of force and violence, in order to achieve their ends. Given such a vision, we have seen the development of the tools used by terrorist groups to propagate their ideas and crimes, recruit their affiliates and obtain financing. Furthermore, those terrorist groups work very quickly and have an unprecedented ability to manoeuvre, and, in the future, we will have to concentrate on the following points.

First, we must make sure that the resolutions and recommendations adopted at the United Nations are reflected in concrete measures that will have an impact on the ground. We also have to implement projects aimed at strengthening the capabilities in several countries, while still observing the principle of national ownership.

Secondly, we have to fight globally against the messages and ideology of terrorist organizations, in particular Da'esh, Al-Qaida and all other affiliated terrorists groups.

Thirdly, we have to fully implement the resolutions of the Security Council with regard to the financing of terrorism. We need the political will on the part of the international community to force countries that finance and support terrorism to stop such activities and to help countries strengthen their capabilities, so that they are able to fulfil their obligations within the framework of those resolutions.

Fourthly, the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters is one of the most serious dimensions of the terrorist threat. It is a multifaceted threat and can be attributed to several causes and is an example of the problems that we need to resolve. Efforts at the national level, as well as joint efforts and coordination, are therefore important. In that connection, the Security Council adopted resolution 2178 (2014), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate published several relevant reports, and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) adopted guidelines for combatting the phenomenon in July 2015. Despite all of those efforts, the most important component remains the implementation of all of the relevant instruments. That must also be accompanied by a political will focused on ending the flow of foreign terrorist fighters in conflict zones and the adoption of a firm stand against enabling parties.

Fifthly, the international community is trying to deal with a major problem, while at the same time stressing the need to respect the principle of the freedom of expression. The Internet and social media have become some of the most sought-after means used by terrorist organizations, including Da'esh and Al-Qaida, for the very purpose of terrorism. The international community cannot remain indifferent and silent in the light of that problem, given the differences between domestic laws and the criteria in other countries. We must reach a common understanding in order to confront that dangerous problem, without undermining the principle of the freedom of expression.

Sixthly, it is important that the United Nations fulfil the role expected of it in confronting terrorism, given that the Organization is the framework within which work in that area is to be undertaken. That role will be discussed in full detail at the fifth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I would like to say that among the most important points in that the area is the improvement of coordination among United Nations entities involved in the fight against terrorism and the coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations, as well as efforts agreed upon outside of the framework of United Nations to share experiences and avoid countervailing or redundant efforts. That must also be mirrored in the structure and responsibilities of the Secretariat. It is also essential to mobilize the necessary resources to finance capacity-building projects within States aimed at fighting terrorism and the violent extremism that leads to terrorism.

Finally, I reiterate that ending terrorism first requires political will and respect for international law with a view to achieving effective implementation of the resolutions of the Security Council and the promotion, coordination and mobilization of the necessary financial resources. Within that framework, Egypt, in its functions as Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, is working to achieve tangible results to the extent possible with regard to all aspects involved in fighting terrorism. As an example, I will mention some extremely useful and valuable meetings that were held to achieve that goal, such as the joint meeting that was just held and those that will be organized with the

Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and the meeting held in order to obtain adequate support for implementing technical capacity-building in the area of counter-terrorism in Iraq.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): I want to thank China for initiating this open debate, which provides an important opportunity to consider one of the most serious and complex challenges facing the international community. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

Global terrorism is not a new phenomenon. But the threat that it now poses is unprecedented in its scale, reach and human cost. The past two years have been among the bloodiest on record. Around the globe, on a nearly daily basis, indiscriminate attacks have been destroying the lives of everyday people, leaving trauma and fear in their wake. And while a relatively limited number of States continue to bear the brunt of that carnage, the rise of new pernicious global networks and their sophisticated use of modern communications technology mean that no country can consider itself safe from that menace. There are no quick or simple solutions.

What is clear, however, is that, now more than ever, international cooperation is vital to keeping our communities safe. The United Nations has a central role to play in ensuring that we remain united in our resolve and in supporting a coordinated and effective approach at the national, regional and global levels. Over the years, a range of measures, such as the designation of terrorists and terrorist organizations and steps to suppress the financing of terrorism have been adopted to address the threat. More work is needed to ensure that those measures are implemented effectively.

While the Council has a key role to play, including through its sanctions committees, Member States and other actors, such as the Financial Action Task Force, are crucial to those efforts as well. Today's joint briefing by the Chairs of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, which is being held in another room at Headquarters, provides a further opportunity to consider those issues. Security cooperation has an important role to play, particularly in countering groups such as Da'esh, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram that seek to impose their will through fear and force.

New Zealand is playing its part through its support to the Iraqi Government in its efforts to combat the forces of Da'esh within its territory, but security responses alone are not an effective and enduring solution to the terrorist threat. A comprehensive approach remains critical — one that also addresses the underlying drivers of violent extremism. As the Secretary-General has just reminded us, this year's biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-terrorism Strategy presents an opportunity to assess whether the structures, information-sharing mechanisms and resources currently in place are sufficient to support effective and efficient cooperation within the United Nations, among Member States and with relevant actors in the private sector and civil society.

It also is timely for the Council to consider what steps it can take to strengthen the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture, catalyse necessary action and ensure that all parts of the system are working together and without unnecessary duplication, while facilitating effective capacity-building. The Council also has an important role to play in identifying and addressing critical gaps in international counter-terrorism efforts. In that regard, I wish to highlight two specific areas that we feel warrant particular attention in the months ahead.

First, we need to ensure an effective response to the challenges posed by the increasing flow of foreign terrorist fighters returning to their homes or travelling to third countries. The Council took decisive steps in resolution 2178 (2014) to address the flow of foreign terrorist fighters into conflict zones. With an estimated 30,000 foreign fighters from more than 100 countries currently active and as the tide in the battle for territory turns, we must have strategies to address the enormous social challenges and security risks that will be posed by returning former fighters. Security- and law-enforcement measures will be important, but rehabilitation and reintegration also need to form a significant part of our response, if we are to prevent further alienation and radicalization. We must also ensure that our response is compliant with, and deeply grounded in, the values that are central to the Organization: respect for the rule of law and for fundamental human rights. International cooperation in

the form of information-sharing, the exchange of good practice, judicial cooperation and targeted capacity-building also has a central role to play. Those countries most at risk cannot be left to face these challenges alone.

Secondly, the Council needs to play its role in taking forward recommendations from the Secretary-General's recent report on preventing violent extremism (A/70/674). We cannot hope to meet the unprecedented terrorist threat we currently face without reducing the appeal of terrorist narratives and addressing the factors that drive vulnerable young people to join such groups. That is long-term work across decades and generations that requires a commitment to building social cohesion and engagement and to fostering inclusive, tolerant communities. We need national responses targeted to the circumstances of specific countries and communities.

The Council also needs to consider what role it can play in supporting such efforts and how its actions, statements and decisions can support our collective response to countering these insidious narratives. Those are issues that we consider warrant serious reflection by the Council.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): We thank you, Mr. President, and the Chinese presidency of the Council for convening this important meeting and for the concept note (S/2016/306, annex) to guide this open debate, which offers the entire United Nations membership an opportunity to renew its commitment to the fight against terrorism — a scourge that the international community in its entirety must contain and destroy if we are to live in and build a more just and peaceful world. We also thank the Secretary-General for sharing with the Council his insights on an issue that has become a matter of extreme concern for us all.

In fact, terrorism is a serious threat to international peace and security and an unprecedented challenge, due to the characteristics it has assumed, with ambitions of conquering and administering territories under a programme aimed at bringing the peoples under the yoke of darkness and obscurantism in total contravention with the norms of civilized existence and in total denial of diversity, be it cultural, racial or religious. Contemporary terrorists, with their backward interpretation of religion, are turning the present world into a dangerous place in which to live.

In Africa, terrorism is spreading widely and dangerously. Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al-Qaida and its affiliates in the Islamic Maghreb, Ansar al-Sharia and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Libya and Al-Shabaab in Somalia spread misery, death and terror without mercy. The Sahel region, Mali, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are also targets of terrorist groups in a rampage of evil and destruction. This is a troubling situation that threatens peace, stability and security throughout the continent.

In recent years, a disturbing development has emerged, linked to the growing number of individuals involved in conflicts worldwide. It feeds a new type of so-called international terrorism, giving rise to the unprecedented phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. Terrorist groups such as Al-Qaida, the Al-Nusra Front, ISIL, Boko Haram and others continue to recruit adherents and to viciously abduct young people to be transformed into terrorist fighters all over the world. The situation has put the international community under alert on the need to identify and address the root causes of the phenomenon and to apply the best approaches to counter this worrying trend.

It is understood that the resolution of ongoing conflicts, fundamentally in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Mali, would have a direct impact on the driving forces of ISIL terrorism, in the Sahel region and elsewhere, where terrorists have pledged allegiance to the self-proclaimed caliphate of Syria and the Levant.

The Secretary-General's report on the threat posed by ISIL to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/92) makes relevant recommendations on the measures States and the United Nations should take to counter such unprecedented threats. The report reminds us that States, while bearing the primary responsibility to counter terrorism, are unable to do so when acting in isolation. The global dimension the terrorist threats have assumed requires global responses for which the United Nations and other international organizations play a critical role by adopting a comprehensive, concerted and coordinated approach.

Such a strategic approach aims at strengthening the capacity of States to counter the financing of terrorism by preventing and disrupting terrorism financing, implementing in full the sanctions regimes imposed by the Security Council against the terrorist organizations, strengthening regional cooperation in the application of instruments related to transnational organized crime,

given its organic link with terrorism, and strengthening financial intelligence in the investigation of terrorist activities. It also aims to counter the recruitment of would-be terrorists through the Internet and to use the Internet in fighting radicalization and violent extremism; to prevent, disrupt and criminalize the travel of foreign terrorist fighters; to address the issue of terrorist fighters who return to their countries of origin; to disrupt the capacity of terrorists to plan and carry out attacks; and to protect the cultural heritage so disgracefully destroyed by terrorist groups.

We reiterate Angola's full commitment to combating the threat posed by terrorism. The Angolan Government established the National Anti-Terrorism Observatory, under the coordination of the Ministry of the Interior, comprising a group of multisectoral experts from various Government departments, including defence and security, with the task of monitoring any potential or current terrorist threats.

Resolution 2178 (2014) sets up concrete action to mobilize the international community to fight foreign terrorist fighters, including by adopting relevant national legislation. Angolan legislation applies heavy prison penalties for anyone collaborating with a terrorist group, either through the provision of information or material means, including weapons, ammunition, tools for committing crimes, shelter, meeting places or by helping to recruit members for terrorist organizations.

International cooperation is a fundamental tool in countering the threat of terrorism, and in that context resolution 1373 (2001) provides guidelines to promote cooperation in combating terrorism. In applying those guidelines, Angola cooperates with member States of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries and of subregional organizations, namely the South African Development Community and Economic Community of Central African States, in the exchange of information, administrative and judicial cooperation in preventing and fighting terrorism. A Regional Early Warning Centre was established to improve communication among the 14 member States of the Southern African Development Community. The Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa operates, at the African Union level, as a mechanism for cooperation, coordination and exchange of information. Bilaterally, Angola cooperates with the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, based in Algiers.

Regarding the financing of terrorism, the Angolan Parliament adopted a law on the prevention of and fight against terrorism and the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. Additionally, a number of legal measures were put in place ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the Anti-Terrorism and Money Laundering Law. In order to centralize and process all the information related to money laundering and terrorist financing, Angola created the Financial Intelligence Unit within the National Bank.

To conclude, I would like to renew the commitment of Angola to continue working with the United Nations in the implementation of the relevant resolutions, programmes and plans of action aimed at effectively preventing and fighting the threat posed by terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): Let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this very important debate and for the clarity of purpose in the concept note (S/2016/306, annex). I thank the Secretary-General for sharing with us the growing concerns on the increasing terrorist acts in may trouble spots and the capacity of terrorism to lurk unsuspectedly in many parts of the world. We look forward to the upcoming review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and our discussions today are useful in articulating our common concern on why we need to act together to face this scourge of humankind.

We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Since 1972, the United Nations has invested many resources in and devoted much attention to addressing the challenges to international peace and security posed by terrorism and the perpetrators of terrorist acts. We have witnessed the many faces of international terrorism and their perverted cost. Our response over the years, whether by the Council, the General Assembly or other organs has resulted in a solid and meaningful corpus of international law, norms and standards. Those include the many legal and other instruments ranging from declarations, conventions, resolutions, strategies and plans of action, not to mention the establishment of and ongoing work undertaken by institutions and structures, such as the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive

Directorate, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and the Committees established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, and resolution 1540 (2004), among others.

The efforts at the international level are increasingly mirrored at the regional level. Particularly in South-East Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations saw the necessity for the region to act collectively as one and has in place its own convention on counter-terrorism, which is an integral part of the region's legal and normative framework. Despite all the focus and attention that we have given and the positive momentum we have created to provide the framework for international and regional cooperation, terrorist attacks and instances of violent extremism have unfortunately risen in recent years. It is increasingly disturbing that many recent attacks indicate evidence of a greater degree of sophistication, complexity and coordination in the planning and execution of attacks, but also with regard to recruitment and radicalization activities by the terrorists. Terror has become a horrifying enterprise.

We do not need to be reminded of the horrifying barbarity perpetuated by known terrorists, such as Al-Qaida, Da'esh and Boko Haram and their affiliates and supporters in parts of Africa, the Middle East, Europe and even in South-East Asia. We saw their capacity for destruction of our common heritage. We saw their abuse of human dignity and rights. We saw their heretical belief and apocalyptic visions and we have seen enough. Our focus on combating and eradicating this menace must be on our collective resolve to share responsibility and join coordinated efforts at all levels. We must deconstruct their narrative and we must not help them to provide air time for terror. Our response must be robust. It must be targeted and we must not be lured onto their ideological turf or provide reasons for them to win more recruits. Our response must be premised on the full respect of international law, including human rights and international human rights law. We must also deny them the sources through which they fund their activities.

Although it is not my intention to delve into a theological debate, it is unfortunate for the majority of Muslims that we are unjustly and wrongly misrepresented by these heretics who claim that their actions are sanctioned by Islam, a faith of peace and compassion, which ironically they purport to profess. It is gratifying to note that the world is not persuaded by their outrageous misrepresentations of the faith that many peaceloving Muslims profess. It is therefore of utmost importance that peace-loving Muslims and moderates from the Muslim world begin to work in earnest to provide the right narrative to the vulnerable and disenchanted youth and address the root causes in order to stem terror groups recruitment drives for both local and foreign terrorist fighters. The path to salvation is through righteous deeds and not through harnessing miseries and self-annihilation.

Malaysia's fight on terror began during its formative years as a nation. In the early pages of its modern history, Malaysia had some experience to share particularly encountering the political or ideological aspects of terrorism. From 1947 to 1989 during the insurgency, Malaysia was embroiled in an ideologically driven conflict perpetuated by unspeakably brutal terrorists seeking to impose their unacceptable political construct on the peaceloving multi-ethnic and multiracial Malaysians. Against that threat, Malaysians of all races and creeds had to learn hard lessons in resilience and unity in order to triumph over terror. In the early years of the conflict, the Government was especially mindful and sensitive to the needs of the populations, who, through no fault of their own, were caught in the middle of an essentially political conflict characterized by violent extremism, not unlike what we are seeing in parts of the Middle East and Africa today.

In Malaysia's experience, peace was ultimately won through the Government's approach of seizing the moral high ground from the terrorists primarily by providing safety and security and opportunity for socioeconomic development. Additionally no effort or resources, including through international assistance, were spared in supporting the Government's commitment to ensure a better future for all nations and a common space for all under the Malaysian sun. Moreover, any claim to legitimacy or popular support by the terrorists was ultimately denied due to their own brutality and despicable actions.

I am justifiably proud that Malaysia stands out as an example where the strategy of winning hearts and minds was scrupulously pursued and successfully implemented. Clearly, in order to provide an effective response and enjoy wide support and legitimacy among those we seek to protect, utmost care must be taken so

as not to play into the terrorists hands. That will require political wisdom and dexterity.

In conclusion, Malaysia remains committed in its final fight against global terror and international terrorism and will continue to play a constructive role in preventing terrorist groups from becoming a menace to society. We shall spare no efforts in this collective endeavour to challenge, expose and unmask terrorists for the vile criminals and violent extremists that they are. God willing, together we shall prevail.

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the People's Republic of China for convening this debate, which, unfortunately, is timely and necessary. Terrorism is not only one of the main threats to international peace and security, but it is also something that affects us all. It is a global phenomenon and, therefore, it requires a united and collective response. This debate is therefore timely, as will be the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to which the Secretary-General referred.

The review this year has a very particular importance. First of all, due to the unfortunate prominence that terrorism has acquired on the international agenda and the oft-mentioned changing nature of its threat, terrorists' capability to adapt requires of us swiftness, decisiveness and flexibility. We therefore have to tackle negotiations on the Global Strategy with a determination to strike at terrorism in a way that will defeat it and with sufficiently nimble and flexible tools, which would make it possible to respond immediately to terrorist attacks.

A few new elements have already been considered by the Security Council, such as the issue of foreign terrorist fighters, which were the subject of resolution 2178 (2014), and the Madrid guidelines for its optimal implementation. Also at issue are new sources of financing, which we have considered in a series of instruments that led last year to resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015). Another new element in 2015 was the presidential statement on the fight against terrorism at the national level.

Hence we are gradually closing in on terrorism. We are not going to be able to eliminate it once and for all, with a decisive blow. That would be difficult, but not, however, impossible. But we can try to eliminate it by asphyxiating it. It is vital that we not let down our guard. In some areas, such as cybersecurity, we still have some leeway to develop new instruments. Another important area is that of justice, where we can bring more pressure to bear in order to eradicate terrorism.

Spain, during its upcoming presidency of the Council, in December of this year, intends to explore the possibilities of increasing international judicial cooperation. Also in December we will review resolution 1540 (2004), which calls for preventing weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of non-State actors with terrorist objectives. We need hardly stress the importance of this threat, and therefore I would like to ask all Member States to participate to the fullest, so that we can make this review a truly effective instrument. Various measures have also been adopted by States at the national level, and as a whole, we have enough individual experience and good practices in order to become a formidable opponent of terrorism.

I would like to turn once again to the review of the Global Strategy to make a few comments.

With respect to prevention, which is the first pillar, we have at our disposal an instrument that Spain greatly values: the Secretary-General's Plan of Action, referred to in General Assembly resolution 70/254, of 12 February. Let us not get bogged down in Byzantine discussions about what is or is not violent extremism. We all know that there is an aspect of extremism that facilitates and leads to terrorism, and it is those aspects on which we should take action. In that context, we deem it important that the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism be carried out in the framework of a comprehensive approach that is also reflected in the concept of tackling the life cycle of radicalization, which the Global Counter-terrorism Forum has given priority to in its work.

Within this comprehensive approach, I would underscore, for the sake of brevity, just two specific aspects: the need to include all social sectors, and the need to develop effective counter-narratives. States, in the face of violent extremism, must promote a mechanism to include all and to conduct a dialogue with all, including communities that are susceptible of being radicalized at the State, regional or local level. But this will not happen by itself, and so we have to create mechanisms and devise national plans and possibilities for cooperation, as rightly stated in the Plan of Action.

I will give the example of two initiatives that have been put into practice by my country. We set up a centre

for the coordination of information on radicalization, and five months ago we launched an initiative on stopping radicalization. To promote civic cooperation, citizens have access to a webpage and an e-mail address, as well as a toll-free phone line, that guarantee confidentiality as well as total anonymity. There is also a special icon on the AlertCops application for smartphones. In five months, we have received 150 communications, of which 45 per cent have proved to be worthy of police investigation.

Along those lines, I will speak about the narrative that we must develop in the face of violent extremism. It should not be limited to negative aspects but should also have a positive dimension, underscoring elements that all of the members of the international community agree on: pluralism, coexistence, respect for differences and an invitation to all to participate. In this respect, the participation of victims, with their example of not seeking revenge and their call for justice, offers us one of the most authoritative voices against violent extremism.

That is why Spain, along with the United States, last October brought for the first time before the Security Council the voices of victims of terrorism. I should like also to underscore the importance of the role of women in the fight against radicalization and terrorism, as can be seen in resolution 2242 (2015), adopted last October, also during the Spanish presidency.

Furthermore, the implementation of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action makes clear the need, and this also represents an opportunity, to strengthen the structure of international cooperation. Thus we reiterate the idea that we should create a high-level post of representative of the Secretary-General against violent extremism.

With respect to the second pillar, I have already expressed a few ideas on the need to react quickly, decisively and nimbly. I will simply stress that we ask the Member States during negotiations not to lose sight of the fact that the objective of the Global Strategy is to defeat terrorism; that is its only objective.

With respect to capacity-building, which is the third pillar, the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre offers us ways to strengthen those capabilities where it is most necessary. The commitment and participation of States will help significantly to strengthen our societies in the face of this scourge.

I cannot but close with a reference that bears repeating, even though it is quite obvious: the need to respect human rights, which is the fourth pillar, because they are an essential element of the DNA of our societies, such that if we fail to protect human rights, even indirectly or temporarily, we would be altering the essence of our way of life and coexistence; hence we would be handing terrorists their first victory.

I would like to conclude with a saying that the terrorist threaten us with repeatedly: that they need to be lucky only once, and we need to be lucky all the time. What they overlook is that our societies and our ways of life are robust and deeply rooted in our consciences, and cannot be defeated. We have demonstrated this, because one, 10 or 100 times, terrorists can be lucky, but we can work to prevent them from even having the option of trying to be lucky.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this debate, and the Secretary-General for his briefing.

Terrorism is the scourge of our time. We are reminded almost daily of the brutality and human cost of terrorist attacks and violent extremism. They strike indiscriminately, in everyday places, an airport in Belgium, a school in Pakistan, a university campus in Kenya, a market square in Syria. And behind each headline lie shattered lives. So many of these stories start and end with the actions of Da'esh, with its warped ideology and false claims of statehood. They are a challenge to the core United Nations values that bind us together.

Faced with this and other threats, countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism has become a priority for us all — a collective challenge that needs a collective response. The United Nations is playing its part. The Council is leading the fight, adopting ground-breaking new resolutions to tackle Da'esh. The Secretary-General has provided a crucial basis for international action through his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, and the General Assembly continues to build consensus on the way forward under the auspices of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Those efforts, together with the actions of the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, are bearing fruit. Da'esh has lost 40 per cent of the territory it once controlled in

Iraq and has lost significant territory in Syria. We must now sustain that pressure. To do so, I believe that there are two top priorities — stopping the flow of money to Da'esh and silencing its message of hate.

When our Finance Ministers met in the Council last year (see S/PV.7587), we committed to choking off the sources of funding that Da'esh needs to survive. Our efforts are working. Its finances are being squeezed. Its fighters' salaries are being cut. We all have a role to play in sustaining that pressure. The United Kingdom has joined global efforts to degrade Da'esh-controlled oil resources so that we can deprive it of that illicit revenue. We are helping partners in the region to reinforce their border-control capacities, cutting off Da'esh access to resources and recruits. We have the strongest legislation against kidnap-for-ransom payments in the Coalition so that we can prevent this most heinous of acts being used to finance even more hatred.

But to truly shut down Da'esh's finances, all States must work to a common purpose, implementing the resolutions adopted by the Council and the provisions of the Da'esh and Al-Qaida sanctions regime. Our actions need to be targeted resolutely and consistently against those terrorist groups. In parallel with targeting their money, we need to silence their messages of hate. Da'esh and other groups use the Internet to spread their views and draw in support at a pace and scale that we have never seen before.

The United Kingdom takes the threats from online terrorist and extremist propaganda extremely seriously, and we have taken significant steps to address them. We work in partnership with industry and police to remove terrorist and extremist material online. We disrupt the circulation of extremist and terrorist ideology through direct referrals to a dedicated referral unit and by supporting civil society groups in providing effective online counter-narratives. Since 2010, United Kingdom referrals have led to a 150,000 pieces of terrorist-related content being voluntarily removed by industry. Removal requests now average 1,000 a week and approximately 70 per cent of them are Da'esh-related. This voluntary partnership is one of the many ways of addressing terrorist use of the Internet without resorting to excessive restrictions. We will continue to work with industry to improve that approach, and I hope other members will play their part, too.

Let me close with this final thought. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is now 10 years old. In the past decade, terrorism has evolved, with new levels of barbarity and new tactics for advancing its cause. In order to sustain our efforts, we need to make sure that we have the most up-to-date approach possible, shaped by emerging trends. That is why the United Kingdom supports an ambitious, forward-looking review of the United Nations strategy this year. To remain relevant, we must consider how best to structure and manage United Nations resources and ensure that new agendas, notably preventing violent extremism, get the resources, structures and focus that they require. We look forward to debating options and ideas with all Member States during the review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy this summer.

Through collective action, we can and will address the threat of terrorism and violent extremism to international peace and security.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I thank you personally, Mr. President, and China for organizing this important debate. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and for his continued leadership on that critical issue.

On a warm spring evening just over two weeks ago, families packed into one of the largest parks in Lahore, Gulshan- i-Iqbal. It was Easter Sunday and the crowd included Christians celebrating the holiday. At around 6.30 p.m., a suicide bomber walked through the gates and blew himself up near a children's swing set. Seventy-five people were killed, including 29 kids. At least 300 were wounded. At a hospital later, a woman named Nasreen Bibi was waiting for an update on her wounded two-year-old daughter and she told a reporter, "We were just here to have a nice evening and enjoy the weather. What kind of people target little children in a park?"

That horrific attack occurred less than a week after three bombs exploded in Brussels, killing 32 innocent people. A day before, that a bomb in Istanbul killed four tourists. This past Saturday, a suicide bomber targeted a restaurant in Mogadishu, killing at least three Somalis at lunchtime. Those attacks remind us that the threat posed by terrorists is not limited to one country or one region; it is not limited to members of just one faith. The thousands of Muslim victims attest to that. Even in the Lahore attack the vast majority of victims were Muslims. And the threat contained to any one battlefield; rather the enemy seeks to attack all of us wherever it can.

Our response to that threat must be just as comprehensive and far-reaching as their ambition. That is why the Security Council has met so frequently to address different elements of the threat and to build a more comprehensive approach to effectively counter terrorism. In the past two years, we have adopted resolutions to counter Da'esh in Syria, Iraq and Libya to cut off the flow of foreign terrorist fighters to and from conflict zones and to target key funding sources for terrorist groups, such as oil, antiquities and kidnapping.

We have also importantly expanded the conversation beyond diplomats by convening the first-ever Security Council meeting of Interior Ministers to strengthen border security (see S/PV.7453) and the first ever session of Finance Ministers (see S/PV.7587) to restrict Da'esh access to funds. In the General Assembly, we will begin negotiations in June on how to better implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, informed by the Secretary-General's important Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Those are key steps, but this is a long-term battle and more must be done. We have to double down on efforts to prevent terrorism groups from recruiting, radicalizing and inspiring others to their cause by better addressing key drivers of violent extremism.

Violent extremist groups purport to offer an alternative to corrupt or authoritarian regimes, an antidote to cultural marginalization, and a path of greater purity. We must counter their propaganda and expose the hollowness and hypocrisy of those claims, while engaging those communities most susceptible to their advances.

At the same time, the international community must also take every measure to degrade and destroy the terrorist groups that threaten our collective security. That goal has been at the heart of the Council measures I described earlier. On the battlefield, coalition air strikes have targeted Da'esh forces, its cash-storage sites, its energy infrastructure and other revenue-generating facilities. Recent military advances, such as those in Iraq and Nigeria against Da'esh and Boko Haram, respectively, have dealt further blows to terrorist groups. As we remain on the offensive, we must continue to strengthen our defence, including through increased information-sharing and international cooperation, so as to further disrupt those groups' access to foreign terrorist fighters and revenue. Such cooperation is also essential to preventing terrorist access to chemical weapons through collaborative efforts such as resolution 1540 (2004), whose tools we must strengthen through the comprehensive review process.

Let us be clear, though, that this shared commitment to preventing terrorist access to chemical weapons in no way lessens our determination to identify the State actors responsible for their use. There is no mistaking the severity of the terrorist threat, the barbarism of its perpetrators or the need to employ every tool in our respective arsenals. However, let us be clear: doing so need not and cannot require the abandoning of the core convictions enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Let us consider one of the issues that have been raised today. There is no doubt that terrorist groups have become dangerously adept at using the Internet and communications technologies to propagate their hateful messages, recruit adherence and urge followers to violence. That is why all Governments must work together to target the online criminal activities that facilitate terrorism, such as illicit money transfers, attack planning and coordination, criminal solicitation and the provision of material support to terrorist groups. It is also why Governments must work closely with private companies, which define the terms under which they will allow customers to use their services.

Such targeted efforts must not be conflated with calls to restrict access or censor the Internet or even, as some have suggested, to effectively shut down whole corners of the web. Such measures would not advance our security. Recruitment and radicalization to violence continue to occur through person-to-person interaction. Such restrictions would cut off the free flow of information and alternative ideas and would therefore restrict one of the best antidotes available to the hate and lies propagated by terrorist groups. As President Obama has said,

> "Ideologies are not defeated with guns. They are defeated by better ideas — a more attractive and compelling vision."

The challenge before us is real. We must use the Internet as effectively as our adversaries do in order to highlight that vision and to reveal the fallacies of their ideologies. Imposing wide-ranging limits on the Internet, though, would mean abandoning our foundational commitments to freedom of expression and opinion. Here in the United States, incitement to eminent violence is not protected speech, but most content on even the most vitriolic websites and

social media accounts is protected from Government suppression by our Constitution, and that is by design. As Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson put it, "Freedom to differ is not limited to things that do not matter much. That would be a mere shadow of freedom." Justice Louis Brandeis argued,

> "Freedom to think as you will and to speak as you think are means indispensable to the discovery and spread of political truth."

It is the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaida that are most afraid of the truth. Depriving people of opportunities to discuss, debate and express themselves online is not going to increase our security. It will increase division among different countries and different people and between citizens and their Government.

The threat that terrorists like Da'esh pose to all of our citizens is clear, and the urgency with which we must counter them could not be greater. But in today's debate we must recognize not only the danger they pose to our safety and security, but the danger that we might overreact, to the detriment of our societies and to our security. We must not deprive our citizens of core freedoms like expression, peaceful assembly, association or religion just because terrorists have taken advantage of them. Doing so would fall precisely into their trap. The international community's victory over terrorism will come through its determined efforts to counter violent extremism and to defeat terrorist groups.

The terrorists in the Lahore park I described earlier were targeting Christians, and they hoped to drive a wedge between them and their Muslim neighbours. However, in the days that followed, that did not happen. Instead of being driven apart, Pakistanis of all faiths came together to queue up in long lines to donate blood at hospitals and to voice outrage and solidarity. A canteen owner who had been serving food near the bombings said, "It is wrong this is happening. Christians are like our brothers and sisters." Their reaction mirrored the shows of solidarity witnessed after other recent attacks and points to the final reason why these terrorists will never win. However despicable and barbaric, their attacks do not leave us scattered in fear. Rather, as I think this Council has proven, they unite us ever tighter in our determination to defeat them.

Mr. Bertoux (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, let me thank you, Sir, for organizing this open debate, and to endorse, in advance, the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

Today I would like to focus on three main themes that should, from my country's viewpoint, be priorities for the international community and our Organization.

The first is violent extremism, which feeds the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon. I would like to begin by thanking the United Nations and Switzerland for having organized a high-level conference on this subject in Geneva on 7 and 8 April. It produced fruitful exchanges, as the Secretary-General just highlighted.

Just who are these individuals who go to Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of jihadist groups, foremost among them Da'esh? They are young people, with varied profiles — men, women, converts, minors, and so on, from more than 100 countries. In France, this phenomenon has reached extremely alarming proportions, with 600 individuals present in the area, including 217 women and 18 minors. To adapt to this new face of the threat, we have taken some important steps.

In April 2014, the French Government adopted a plan to combat terrorist networks and violent radicalization. An interministerial committee is responsible for coordinating the strategy to prevent and treat radicalization. The Government has also established a territorial mechanism to monitor persons that have been reported and to assist families in order to respond appropriately to each case. Finally, the law of 13 November 2014 introduced into our law several major innovations. It instituted a ban on leaving the territory and a prohibition on entry into and residence in national territory for foreigners not residing in France that constitute a danger to national security.

At the international level, it is essential that the United Nations remain committed to stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and to preventing violent extremism. The full implementation of resolution 2178 (2014) and following up the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism are the two primary axes of that action. The Secretary-General's Plan in particular aims to unite and better coordinate efforts that we all undertake, Member States and United Nations, at the national, regional and international levels to prevent radicalization, which is an essential aspect of the fight against terrorism. That Plan makes concrete the strategic role of guidance and coordination that the United Nations should play in this area.

I take the opportunity provided by this debate to announce that in September, France will co-organize with UNESCO a seminar in Paris on the prevention of violent extremism through education. Preventing the radicalization of youth will also be one of the topics discussed at the sixteenth Summit of la Francophonie, in Madagascar in November 2016.

The second priority for us all is the fight against terrorist financing and the full implementation of resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015). The funding of Da'esh was greatly affected by the strikes of the coalition, forcing the group to decrease the salary that it pays its fighters. However, we will manage to drain the finances of that organization only through increased international mobilization. We call on all our partners to implement the United Nations resolutions and to adopt robust measures. I welcome the holding, at this very moment, of a joint meeting of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, on terrorist financing, with the presence of the President of the Financial Action Task Force on Money-Laundering.

At the national level, France has a plan to combat the financing of terrorism. The plan has three objectives. to reduce anonymity in the economy in order to better trace financial transactions; to improve monitoring, through the mobilization of financial actors in the fight against terrorism; and to strengthen the capacity to freeze assets held by the actors of terrorism.

France is also fully mobilized in the fight against the trafficking in works of art and antiques. We have drawn the attention of antique dealer associations to the trafficking of works of art from Syria and Iraq and to the fact that such trafficking may contribute to the financing of Da'esh. Customs has enhanced the surveillance of imports of cultural property, particularly items from the Middle East. The President of the Republic announced at UNESCO the introduction by France of a customs control of the importation of cultural property and the creation of safe havens in France to hold endangered cultural property. These provisions have been included in a bill currently being debated in Parliament.

Finally, the third area of work, combating terrorist propaganda, which is undertaken pursuant to resolution 2253 (2015), is another fundamental area where mobilization of the international community is indispensable. The ease with which terrorists use the Internet and social networks so as to spread their messages of hate is particularly worrisome. We stress that any initiative in this area should respect the freedom of expression. Upholding human rights and the rule of law, as well as education, inclusion and social harmony, will be key factors in the long term in any strategy to prevent or of fight violent extremism. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that combating terrorism, which is so crucial to the safety of our fellow citizens, necessarily goes hand in hand with upholding human rights.

Given a threat of this scope, we have no other choice but to strengthen international cooperation. Specific progress is possible, as was demonstrated by the adoption today of the passenger name registry by the European Parliament. In each of these areas, the United Nations has a great added value to provide, be it in the creation of standards, strategic guidelines or mobilizing the international community. The review of the United Nations global strategy in May would be a time to continue these discussions on how to strengthen international cooperation in counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism. France will play its full part in these debates.

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, the delegation of Senegal thanks you and welcomes your initiative to convene this public debate on counter-terrorism. It cannot come at a better time, given the almost metronomic recurrence of terrorist attacks across the globe.

International terrorism, which continues to spread, has reached hitherto unseen proportions and remains of utmost concern for the international community, including for the countries of West Africa and the Sahel that have been struck hard by attacks, kidnappings, summary executions and unprecedented violence perpetrated by armed groups with such names as Al-Shabaab, Al-Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Boko Haram and others, but their methods are as similar as they are barbarous, sowing the seeds of destruction, terrorism, massacres and desolation within our communities.

Given this threat, it is urgent that the international community provide its support to the West African and the Sahel-Saharan regions in the implementation and operationalization of action plans and other subregional initiatives, including the United Nations integrated

strategy for the Sahel, the African Union initiative to create an African force to fight against terrorism, the Nouakchott process and Group of Five for the Sahel force project.

To be effective, any initiatives to counter terrorism or fight violent extremism should first address both the structural and contextual factors that lead to the rise of terrorism, including ignorance, marginalization and discrimination as well as poor governance and the lack of socioeconomic prospects, the erroneous interpretations or the instrumentalization of religion and the abuse religious vocabulary. My point is that authoritarian repression or a military approach is not enough in and of itself.

It is therefore key that, on the one hand, we ensure the effective implementation of development programmes and that, on the other, we also support initiatives that give priority to dialogue, tolerance and understanding among civilizations, cultures, peoples and religions. In all these cases, intolerance should never be associated with a religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. This is a global scourge that affects the international community as a whole, placing it in a state of emergency — indeed, a state of siege.

In its efforts to implement measures to counter international terrorism and violent extremism, Senegal has adopted an approach that combines prevention, cooperation and quick response with, inter alia, the adoption, in 2007, of two laws that provide for severe punishment of perpetrators of terrorist acts and, in 2009, a law that combats the financing of terrorism. These measures strengthen the Senegalese reality, which is characterized by a successful ethnic blending, religious harmony — religious symbiosis, even — in a State where the rule of law, democracy, human rights, good governance and the fight against the impunity are cardinal values.

Terrorist groups are masters in the art of using the Internet and social media to incite violence, recruit fighters, and finance and plan terrorist acts. In this respect, the relevant provisions of resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2253 (2015) must be implemented in a coordinated, methodical and effective manner by Member States, in particular through pursuing cooperation in intelligence and better collaboration with private organizations that provide these services, all of this in order to improve enforcement systems.

To finance their activities, terrorist cleverly — or I should say, cynically — exploit gaps in financial systems and regional, national and international legal instruments to collect funds, including through the illicit exploitation and sale of such natural resources as oil and precious stones, as well as through kidnappings for ransom, trafficking in human beings and weapons, various forms of extortion, looting and sale of valuable cultural artefacts.

To counter these activities, it is necessary to readapt the international financial system by making it more secure, calling upon Member States to apply the standards set by Financial Action Task Force rules on terrorist financing and strengthen partnerships with the private sector, in particular charitable organizations, so as to identify suspicious activity. In this regard, we think it important to recall the Secretary-General's recommendations made in his report (S/2016/92) on the implementation of resolution 2253 (2015), while working to keep the fight against terrorism and its financing from having a detrimental effect on migrants, refugees and displaced persons. Nor should the countries of origin of these migrants be penalized, as they benefited in 2014 from around $400 billion in remittances by emigrants, which is more than three times official development assistance.

The recruitment by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other extremist groups, foreign terrorist fighters from a hundred different countries and whose number exceeds 30,000, according to United Nations statistics, is another major challenge that we have to face in an urgent, effective and coordinated manner. These combatants constitute a real threat to countries of origin, transit countries and destination countries. To eradicate these phenomena better cooperation in border control is imperative. However, measures to be taken in this context should not undermine the principle of the free movement of people and goods. It is in this spirit and in this framework that a subregional workshop will be held in Dakar in May 2016 on border control in West Africa, Central Africa and the Sahel. Promoting dialogue and preventing conflicts, involving the people by mobilizing youth, empowering women, education, strengthening competencies and improving access to jobs are just as important to a good strategy for countering violent extremism, the radicalization of young people and recruitment by extremist organizations.

Considering how difficult it seems to be for the international community to come up with successful

strategies, it is crucial that we take an inclusive and united approach with a view to the long term that strengthens cooperation at all three of the subregional, regional and international levels. In that regard, it helps when Member States, acting in full sovereignty, devise national strategies and plans of action that are based on local realities and therefore better adapted to their own socioeconomic and security contexts. The international community as a whole and the United Nations in particular should assist in strengthening States' capacities in that regard.

We believe that the upcoming June review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy will be an excellent opportunity for deeper reflection on the effectiveness of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture and on the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. We should take advantage of the event to ensure the relevance of the Strategy, which has to be able to adapt to today's new challenges and realities.

I would be remiss if I did not commend the outstanding work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which has united 34 international entities in the fight against this scourge and plays an essential role in coordinating United Nations efforts in the area. Similarly, the Counter-Terrorism Committee, established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) and effectively chaired by the Egyptian delegation, deserves all our support and cooperation for its numerous activities implemented under the leadership of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, whose recommendations in its country visit reports should receive regular follow-up and evaluation as well as information exchange with the countries concerned.

Lastly, I would like to reiterate Senegal's willingness and unwavering commitment to making every effort in our shared fight against terrorism, including in the as yet unfinished task of drafting an international convention on combating terrorism, and especially in view of the fact that Africa already has a regional convention on the subject in place, with a dedicated research centre headquartered in Algiers.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to join other delegations in commending you, Mr. President, on your initiative in holding today's open debate and for the concept note (S/2016/306, annex). I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive briefing.

Inevitably, I will be revisiting some issues that have already been covered by previous speakers, and I will therefore try to modify my statement somewhat.

Uruguay firmly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorism demands no exceptions to its barbarous brutality. There is no political, ideological, philosophical, religious, ethnic, racial or any other justification for it. We are extremely worried by the disturbing frequency of these devastating acts around the world. Terrorism today has transcended national and regional boundaries to become a global phenomenon, and no State or person can be considered safe from it. We are horrified by the levels of barbarity and cruelty we see in the criminal acts perpetrated by groups such as Da'esh, Al-Qaida, Boko Haram, the Taliban, Al-Shabaab and others. Terrorists do not distinguish between combatants and civilians. Their attacks, whether targeted or indiscriminate, are aimed at innocent populations and individuals.

The threat is global and our response must be global, too. More than ever, the international community must stand united if it is to reject and combat terrorism, and that requires coordinated action. Terrorism takes many forms and evolves in time and space, which makes it difficult to fight, and its enormous capacity for destruction and grave violations of human rights makes it a serious threat to international peace and security. The complexity of this issue, and the frequency and atrocity of its acts and their terrible consequences should goad the international community to redouble its efforts to protect its citizens. We must strengthen and increase our cooperation at every level, between States and among international, regional and subregional organizations, in order to share best practices and to strengthen States' national capacities for preventing and suppressing terrorism in all its forms.

We must also consider the participation of organizations that represent civil society, the private sector, academia, educational institutions, community and religious leaders, young people and women. We would especially like to emphasize the importance of the role of women in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, as the Security Council recognized in resolution 2242 (2015). We share the belief in the importance of ensuring women's empowerment as a central factor in strategies to combat terrorism and violent extremism. We would also like to highlight the crucial role that religious leaders should play in fighting violent extremism, without ignoring the fact

that political and social unrest, economic problems and cultural decadence create fertile ground for terrorism to grow.

We appreciate the Organization's efforts and actions conducted through the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and all the United Nations entities that go to make it up, as well as those of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate and the various sanctions committees. We support the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and await the results of its review in June. We are committed to the efforts aimed at strengthening its implementation and we understand the importance of acting collectively. We would also like to emphasize that the fight against terrorism must be conducted with respect for and in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, particularly international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law.

Prevention must be a key element in any strategy for combating terrorism, along with the pursuit and prosecution of the perpetrators of terrorist acts. Every State has a responsibility to prevent the emergence internally of extremist ideologies that can incite terrorist speech or methods. It is important to formulate national prevention strategies with the support of the United Nations and by sharing best practices and technical assistance where necessary.

We appreciate the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. We join the General Assembly in urging States to refrain from financing or encouraging terrorist activities, and from supporting them in any other way or by providing training for them. We know that States must also focus on combating domestic complicity with terrorist groups, wherever they may be.

The fight against terrorism must be won in the realm of ideas and with respect for the law. We therefore emphasize the importance of the role of education and public debate as a means of combating extremism and intolerance. We must raise awareness of the value of human life and banish indifference. We stress how crucial it is that States have judicial frameworks and stable, functional institutional structures. It is also vital to develop and strengthen international cooperative judicial instruments and effective mechanisms for border controls and financial oversight regimes.

Uruguay expresses its great readiness to contribute within its abilities to the fight against this scourge. In that respect, it is developing a national strategy and striving to closing the identified gaps in its institutional capacity. Uruguay recognizes that in combating terrorism, it is essential to attack its funding sources and its involvement in organized crime, which threatens the transparency of the economic and financial system and undermines public order and security.

Uruguay actively participates in regional and multilateral entities related to security issues in general and terrorism in particular, and maintains bilateral exchanges of information and good practices. It has also made progress in its accession to various instruments relating to the international fight against terrorism, most recently the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which came into force in my country on 3 April.

Uruguay also seeks to increase its deterrent capacity against terrorism and organized crime, in which border control is key. Uruguay recently installed the most up-to-date passenger control systems in its airports for immigration purposes and used by Interpol under the rubrics automated border control, passenger name recorder and advance passenger information.

The task of combating and eliminating international terrorism is large and complex. The onus lies with all members of the international community. Multilateralism is a fundamental principle of Uruguay's foreign policy and the keystone of its international relations. In that regard, Uruguay approaches this vital challenge with commitment, solidarity respect for international law and human rights.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): I want to thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate to discuss one of the most pressing issues on the Security Council's agenda.

Ukraine condemns the phenomenon of terrorism unreservedly in all its forms and manifestations. We support the central role of the United Nations and the Security Council in promoting international cooperation in fighting terrorism, including in the framework of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Ensuring its effective implementation requires closer cooperation among Member States, the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and other United Nations family agencies and bodies.

Ukraine is a party to all counter-terrorism treaties and is closely engaged in this endeavor with relevant international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe, the Financial Action Task Force, and the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development.

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al-Qaida, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and others are not just a regional menace but a global challenge whose violent ideologies constitute a threat to the entire international community. My country strongly condemns the crimes and acts of mass violence that these terrorist groups are committing against civilians from Syria and Iraq to France and Belgium. We are fully committed to the international coalition's efforts to combat this global threat.

The escalation of conflicts nowadays is directly influenced by the influx of foreign terrorist fighters. We believe that the primary obligation to prevent the movements of foreign terrorist fighters lies primarily with the source countries, which have to spot and stop them at the earliest stages. Ukraine is actively contributing to global and regional efforts aimed at stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters by countering the recruitment and transit of terrorists, in line with the relevant resolutions.

During the past year alone, eight ISIL transit points have been identified in Ukraine and shut down by the national security services. Twenty-one ISIL supporters have been detained and deported to their source countries. Over the past two years, about 600 foreign citizens have been denied entry into Ukraine on the basis of information about their involvement in ISIL activities.

International terrorism and violent extremism threaten our core values and principles, including human rights, the rule of law, democracy, equal opportunity and freedom. It goes without saying that fighting these threats only through military means does not have a long-lasting effect. Eliminating their visible manifestations without removing their root causes propagates continuous outbreaks of terrorist attacks all over the world. In this regard, Ukraine would like to extend its full support for the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, which has capped international endeavours in this field.

Combating the activities of individual terrorists and terrorist groups will be insufficient if the problem of terrorist financing, including of State-sponsored terrorism, is not properly addressed. We underline the particular importance of effective efforts at both the international and national levels to prevent and counteract the financing of terrorist activities and terrorist organizations, as well as to ensure the ultimate prosecution and punishment of individuals or organizations that provide such funding in any form and by any methods. These efforts should be based on relevant United Nations legal instruments and those elaborated within the framework of the Financial Action Task Force.

Ensuring the genuine — and not merely declarative — cooperation of States and the mutual assistance of their law enforcement agencies in preventing the financing of terrorism is the key to overcoming this phenomenon, which has become rampant at the regional and global levels. Any link between this crime and Government agencies or officials must trigger the international responsibility of States to prosecute the crime of financing terrorism.

In this very context, I cannot fail to mention the topicality of this issue for Ukraine, which has been dealing with the challenge of terrorist activities in the Donbas region, carried out with the direct support of the Russian Federation, since 2014. The policy of terror against Ukrainian civilians in the Donbas is one of the dreadful hallmarks of Russian aggression against Ukraine. The terrorist component in the undeclared war against Ukraine is clearly visible and has become a fact of life of the occupied areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

During the past two years, Ukraine has received irrefutable evidence of the terrorist nature of the organizations known as the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, and of the direct involvement of the Russian Federation in the financing, support and coordination of these terrorist groups, which have perpetrated numerous crimes and carried out terrorist activities against civilians, in particular in Mariupol, Volnovakha, Kramatorsk, Donetsk. Kharkiv and many other Ukrainian cities. The shocking reality is that foreign terrorist fighters, primarily from Russia, constitute a significant part of the approximately 40,000-strong illegal armed group fighting against the Government of Ukraine in the Donbas.

Weapons and manpower continue to flow from Russia to Ukraine's east through uncontrolled sections of the Ukrainian-Russian border. The observer mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe at the Russian checkpoints on the border has continuously reported high numbers of persons in military-style clothing crossing the border in both directions. In particular, since the beginning of the Mission's operation in July 2014, over 26,000 crossings of this category have been reported by the mission from only two border crossing points. The Russian military continues to train terrorists and the fighters of illegal armed groups at the military camps set up in the occupied Crimea and parts of the Donbas, as well as in the Rostov, Belgorod and Tambov regions of the Russian Federation.

Having been directly involved in all these terrorist activities, the Russian Federation is clearly violating its commitments undertaken in accordance with a set of legally binding international instruments on the prevention of and combating international terrorism, including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions.

Apart from that, Russia has launched a mass-media campaign aimed at the radicalization of the population in the occupied territories of the Donbas, which creates fertile ground for the spread of terrorist narratives. Moreover, the Russian media and nationalist circles glorify the Russian terrorist fighters as they depart to Ukraine and return to Russia, instead of being prosecuted.

As for Crimea, yesterday the Russian occupation authorities adopted a decision to suspend altogether, and with immediate effect, the activities of the Majlis of the Crimean Tatars — their only legislative body. This is not just one more crime in the genocidal spree launched by Russia against the Crimean Tatars. This outrageous act by the aggressor country has a direct bearing on our debate today, for it will but further radicalize the already desperate and highly charged fabric of Crimean Tatars — the youth first of all — with consequences that are hard to predict. We call on the Security Council and the Secretary-General to unequivocally condemn this lawless act. We therefore consistently urge the international community to put additional pressure on the Russian Federation to stop war and terrorism in the heart of Europe.

In recent decades, the international community has registered remarkable achievements in adopting legally binding instruments to counter terrorism. However, more should be done to prevent and combat this scourge. Our major task is to conclude the work on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which would supplement the existing international legal counterterrorism framework and provide States with a useful tool.

One of the major obstacles on this course is finding a clear definition for the act of terrorism. Resolving that problem would allow the international community to address more efficiently some outstanding issues related to bringing to account not only individual terrorists and organizations but also those States responsible for organizing, financing, encouraging, providing training or otherwise directly or indirectly supporting terrorist activities. Our view is that certain principles of the Geneva Declaration on Terrorism, adopted in 1987 by the International Conference on the Question of Terrorism, as well as the proposal put forward in 2007 in the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly, could be taken as the bases for a new legally binding instrument.

Another aspect that increasingly warrants our close attention is the protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks capable of disrupting the functioning of banking and finance, telecommunications, emergency services, air and rail transportation, energy and water supplies, and of causing numerous civilian casualties. Ukraine is of the opinion that the Security Council should expeditiously address this problem by mobilizing international efforts aimed at diminishing the mere possibility of such attacks.

Ukraine strongly believes that one of the most important aspects of countering international terrorism is to commemorate its victims. Unless it remembers the lessons of the past and educates the generations to come about them, humankind will be doomed to repeat the dark chapters of its history. In this vein, I would like to recall the initiative of Ukraine with regard to the establishment of the international day of commemoration of the memory of the victims of terrorist acts.

Finally, we see great merit in having the Council address the issue of the terrorism scourge on a regular and systematic basis, including this coming September at the highest possible level.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the initiative of the Chinese delegation to lead discussions on the most topical aspect of fighting terrorism in the framework of an open debate. We believe that it is very timely.

Right now, with the fight against terrorism in Syria and Iraq in full swing, there is a clearer picture of the whole range of issues facing international counter-terrorism cooperation. We call for a frank and open discussion of those issues and a determination of where the capacities for their resolution lie. The steadily increasing activities of terrorist organizations is at the centre Council's attention. Resolutions 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015) adapted United Nations mechanisms to the most recent threats from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Jabhat Al-Nusra, Al-Qaida and affiliated groups. The obligation of Governments in the implementation of sanctions regimes and in the suppression of illicit flows of financing and human resources to terrorists was stressed.

At the same time, despite the declared convergence of positions and the existence of necessary tools for the Security Council, in practice, combatting international terrorism is far from ideal. The reasons lie largely in the unprecedented spread of that scourge in the Middle East and North Africa. In that region, carrying out external geopolitical schemes, accompanied by gross interference in the internal affairs of its States, led to an erosion of Government institutions and pumping resources into opposition forces and the uncontrolled spread of weapons and ammunition. It was triggered by an unprecedented surge in radicalization of local populations. Several countries are ready to use terrorists and extremists as a means of pressuring legitimate Governments, and double standards in appraising the activities of radicals have in the last analysis led to an outburst of groups such as ISIL and Jabhat Al-Nusra. These double standards are, unfortunately, obvious in the implementation of counter-terrorism decisions taken by the Security Council.

The largest portion of oil products, artefacts and other items exported by ISIL from the territories it controls continues to be sold through Turkey, owing to its complacency or inaction. Turkey's borders with Iraq and especially with Syria are the main transit routes for foreign terrorists fighters and weapons, most of which fall into the hands of the terrorists. In that regard, we believe it is relevant, in the name of counter-terrorism, to consider closing the Turkish-Syrian border. We might also want to consider levying a comprehensive economic and trade embargo against ISIL.

If Turkey believes that it is doing everything necessary to curtail the flows of supplies to terrorists, that could be corroborated by independent monitors. We call on the Turkish Government to invite international observers to the Syrian border and the Ceyhan port, on a voluntary basis, for that purpose. To date, we have not seen any explanation for the bad-faith implementation by Turkey of its obligations under Security Council resolutions, other than Ankara's desire to carry out its own agenda in Syria and Iraq.

In future joint work, we need to take into account the specifics of terrorist threats, especially as they have taken shape in recent years. In that regard, we would necessarily underscore the threat of chemical terrorism. Fighters from various radical groups, as recently as this year, have used toxic chemical agents on several occasions. There is a known case of ISIL having used mustard gas in Deir ez-Zor.

Russia has long expressed concern that terrorist groups, which are rampant in the Middle East, have obtained a formidable capacity to wage war using toxic substances. We believe that the Council has yet to exhaust all of its options to combat that threat. Yesterday, with our Chinese partners, we circulated a draft resolution to the Security Council, clarifying the counter-terrorism portion of the mandate of the joint investigative mechanism of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for incidents involving the use of chemical weapons in Syria, pursuant to resolution 2235 (2015). We hope that there will be a speedy adoption of the draft resolution by the Council.

As of now, the main phase of the operations of Russian air forces against ISIL and other terrorist groups in Syrian territory has been completed. The objectives of the mission set out for the forces have been carried out successfully. The terrorists have suffered considerable damage and have been removed from a number of areas in the country. A striking symbol of

ISIL's retreat was the liberation of the ancient city of Palmyra by Syrian forces, with Russian support.

However, to fully defeat the terrorists, much remains to be done. We once again call for strengthening of coordination and cooperation among States to defeat ISIL, Jabhat Al-Nusra and affiliated groups. That is necessary and should be done by dispensing with double standards, with the United Nations playing a central coordinating role and on the sound footing of international law.

I necessarily have to comment on the statement made by the representative of Ukraine. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian delegation is once again using the Council to diffuse its anti-Russian propaganda. I believe that several of the statements made are absolutely scandalous. The Security Council does not benefit from that, and neither does the image of Ukrainian diplomacy. There is a need to stick to the agenda, which today does not contain an item on the settlement of the situation in Ukraine. The full-scale hostilities were begun in 2014 against the civilians in the eastern part of the country by the Kyiv politicians who came to power after a bloody coup d'état, and they continue to try to justify their actions unsuccessfully.

Mr. Yoshikawa (Japan): I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for raising this timely and important topic. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his insightful briefing.

We witness almost every week terrorist attacks all over the world. In March alone, they occurred in Pakistan, Belgium, Turkey, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Tunisia. I express my deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims and their families, as well as to the Governments and the peoples of each of those countries.

Japan condemns terrorism in the strongest terms, and we are determined work with the international community to overcome terrorism. On Monday this week, in Hiroshima, the Group of Seven Foreign Ministers expressed their determination to stand united in countering terrorism in all its forms and wherever it occurs.

The fight against terrorism requires diverse efforts. Today, I would like to focus on two issues. The first is foreign terrorist fighters. It is estimated that around 30,000 fighters, from more than 100 Member States, are attracted to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and their associated groups. In order to stem the flow of such fighters, it is important to implement all relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular, resolution 2178 (2014). Today, many of those fighters travel from their countries of origin to another country before travelling on to the final destination, which helps them avoid detection; that is called "broken travel".

In order to detect broken travel, it is necessary not only to obtain passport details through the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS), but also to obtain passenger name records (PNR), which contain passengers' booking information, such as their itineraries, the names of travelling companions and payment methods. The Permanent Representative of Uruguay already pointed out the importance of those systems. The Security Council recommends that Member States utilize both the APIS and the PNR systems as outlined in resolution 2178 (2014) and presidential statement S/PRST/2014/23, respectively. To my knowledge, only about a quarter of the 193 Member States have introduced APIS, and even fewer have introduced the PNR system. Only a small number of Member States have adopted those systems, which is not effective enough to detect broken travel. I therefore urge all Member States to introduce the systems as soon as possible. In that connection, I was very encouraged to hear from the delegation of France that the European Parliament approved the introduction of the PNR system today.

No country is immune from terrorism. Japan is on high alert for the risk of terrorist attacks in preparing the upcoming important events that Japan will host, such as the Group of Seven Summit in May this year, the Rugby World Cup in 2019 and the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020. We are committed to enhancing counter-terrorism measures, so that people from around the world can feel safe and will be secure when visiting Japan on those occasions.

The second aspect that I would like to address is the importance of tackling the root causes of terrorism. Many previous speakers, including my neighbour Malaysia, have also highlighted the importance of that aspect. Among the root causes, I wish to focus on how we can prevent violent extremism that can be conducive to terrorism.

One possible way to prevent violent extremism is to provide assistance aimed at creating a society that

does not give in to violent extremism. In that context, Japan attaches great importance to supporting women and girls so as to make societies more resilient. By empowering women, we can empower other members of their families and communities. To that end, Japan has continuously funded projects of UN-Women, as well as those of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. One of this year's projects seeks to reinforce women's leadership through their engagement in political dialogue in the Sahel region. I hope that women's participation in political dialogue will contribute to building communities that are resilient against violent extremists, such as Boko Haram.

Finally, I would like to stress that violent extremism has broad aspects in its nature, and so, preventing it requires a comprehensive approach, utilizing all the knowledge and experience of all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Japan commends and strongly supports the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674), which provides the basis for an all-United Nations approach. The Plan of Action and an all-United Nations approach should be reflected in the review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to be held in June in the General Assembly. I wish to conclude by expressing Japan's willingness to participate constructively in that debate.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your delegation's initiative to convene this open debate to address this issue to which my country attaches particular importance, namely, the threats posed by terrorism to international peace and security. We also value the concept note (S/2016/306, annex) prepared by your delegation, which contains key elements for the discussion of this problem of global scope, with a view to intensifying international efforts to prevent, combat and eliminate this scourge.

We also welcome the presence of and briefing by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and thank him for his valuable contribution to the topic of our deliberations today. As usual, my delegation supports the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon, given the fact that its use has been a constant feature in various political conflicts in our modern history. However, in recent years, terrorism has assumed new dimensions, which greatly affect the manner in which it can be combatted. Terrorism in the Middle East has become an insurgency on the part of a sector of the population that uses terrorist methods to achieve their political goals. Those groups, actual armies, have been able to take advantage of unprecedented military and logistical capacities, which has enable their expansion into significant countries in the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel, with significant impact even on other parts of the world, including Europe and Asia.

The acts committed by terrorist groups endanger the territorial integrity and political unity of States, thereby contributing to the destabilization of legitimate Governments and violating their constitutional order, with the ultimate aim of overthrowing them. All of that not only produces adverse outcomes for the economic and social development of peoples, but also includes the destruction of their infrastructure and institutions. In that regard, we should ask ourselves what conditions are conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism. The situation experienced today by the brotherly peoples of the Middle East and North Africa is no coincidence. It is due, in our opinion, to the military intervention by major Powers in Iraq in 2003 and in Libya in 2011, directed towards overthrowing the Governments of sovereign countries, which, in turn, created the conditions for Da'esh, Al-Qaida and Ansar al-Sharia, among others, to develop in those regions in order to implement their strategy of destruction, based on terror and denial of the Other.

Today, the violent actions of these terrorist groups and their associated entities have inflicted sectarian violence on several African and Middle Eastern countries, leaving in their wake a trail of destruction, which is worsened by the fact that, shielded by a sectarian interpretation of religion, they are carrying out ethnic cleansing of vast areas of Iraq, Syria and Libya, among others. It is important to consider the effect that the military interventions in the wars since 2003 have had on the societies of those countries. Children who at the time of the interventions were six, seven or eight years old are the young people today, who are 20 or 25 years of age and have joined terrorist groups en masse. They were children in societies that in those years experienced a culture of death, a contempt for life, sectarianism and intransigeance.

Terrorism and violent extremism are problems of a global scope that threaten international peace and security. This is reflected in the unprecedented threat represented today by the self-proclaimed Islamic State, which has been joined by at least 34 terrorist organizations from different regions of the world — not only in the Middle East and North Africa — and is exacerbated by the grave phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters whereby more than 30,000 people, including women and young people, from at least 100 countries from different latitudes, have joined these terrorist groups, not to mention the threat posed by lone wolves.

The use of violence and terrorism to subjugate societies, civilizations, religions and beliefs is taking on new forms, such as the recruitment of children, kidnapping, the destruction of the cultural heritage of humankind, slavery and sexual violence as a weapon of war, as well as the use of chemical weapons. However, deep down, those despicable practices, which have severely impacted civilians — in particular ethnic and religious minorities and the most vulnerable groups whose human rights have been systematically and deliberately violated leading to an unprecedented humanitarian crisis — are still the result of practices that respond to intolerance, violent extremism and sectarianism. The experience of those actions paint a clear picture of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and the perpetrators of those actions must be brought to justice.

Experience teaches us that terrorist groups feed on despair, injustice, frustration, lack of opportunities, the denial of human rights and fundamental freedoms, particularly in devastated societies, to promote practices that resemble those of fascism, as well as their criminal, ideological and political agendas. Poverty; social and economic inequalities; political, ethnic and religious intolerance; and violations of the sovereignty of peoples and nations, among others, are also part of the so-called push factors of terrorism. In addition, protracted crises further exacerbate conflicts and serve as a breeding ground for violent extremism and terrorism to fuel organized transnational crime and to facilitate the flow, financing and training of foreign terrorist fighters, thereby enhancing terrorist organizations' capacity for action. Hence the long-term solution to the threats posed today necessarily involves, among others, a political settlement of the conflicts in countries, such as Syria, Libya, Iraq and Palestine.

We would like to draw the attention of the Security Council to the elements that are mentioned in the concept note and that we believe are crucial to be able to have an effective counter-terrorism strategy. First of all, we must determine how the terrorist groups have achieved such a military and logistical capacity. They are terrorist groups that have heavy weapons; they are terrorist groups that have missiles; they are terrorist groups that have chemical weapons. Who has given those weapons to those terrorist groups and who maintains them? The terrorist groups occupy wide swaths of territory in Iraq, Libya and Syria. They are capable of defeating and containing national armies from those countries and they are capable of resisting the actions of coalitions and other international efforts aimed at defeating them. Not only do they occupy and govern in those territories, but they also impose their fascist and extremist ideology. That is only possible with foreign support.

Furthermore, terrorist and extremist groups also receive a great deal of financing, which is the result of the illicit trafficking in oil. It is not easy to sell oil illegally. There are mechanisms that are perfectly monitored by all international organizations, and we do not understand how they do not condemn or do not take clear action to put a stop to that financing of terrorist groups, which is the result of oil sales. To sell oil one must transport it and store it. It must be transported on ships. Therefore, the Security Council should act honestly on the basis of the resolutions that it has adopted in order to stop the illegal flow of those resources that fuel terrorism. In addition, we ask ourselves how it is possible that the international financing system, which is controlled and regulated by the large centres of power, is not capable of detecting and blocking those financial flows. We believe that this is an activity that should be tackled with genuine commitment.

Another serious problem is the trafficking of small arms and light weapons. We have said that the Security Council must promote a resolution to prohibit the trafficking of small arms and light weapons, which is a euphemism because small arms and light weapons range from heavy submachine guns to missiles. However, in the area with that technical designation, we have allowed weapons to be distributed to violent non-State groups. Those violent non-State groups then become terrorist groups, which is what is happening and has happened in Syria, where non-State armed groups are trained, armed and equipped with advanced

destructive technology and then go on to join Al-Nusra and other terrorist groups.

In order to defeat the Government of President Muammar Al-Qadhafi, thousands of tons of weapons and munitions were distributed in Libya. Today they are in the hands of various militias and factions and have been distributed and spread in Africa, especially in the Sahel region, which is one of the main threats for the security of those brotherly countries in Africa.

The issue of terrorism cannot be dealt with by using a double standard. We cannot instigate the creation of terrorist groups to defeat, combat and destabilize Governments. This is not the first time this has happened and experience has shown that these extremist groups then become a problem and a threat for the Governments that stimulated their creation. That was the case in Afghanistan and it is the case in Libya. We hope that we do not have to wait for documents to be declassified to understand that this was one of the main causes that has fuelled the current terrorist groups.

Furthermore, the concept note draws attention to the use of social networks as an instrument to destabilize Governments. The use of that mechanism is nothing new. The fact that the tremendous and penetrating capacity of social networks to destabilize legitimate Governments is now being used has been condemned on various occasions. That happened in Iran and with other Governments. It is just that now terrorist groups also use that platform to spread their fascist and extremist ideology and recruit young people around the world. The fact that more than 30,000 foreign terrorist fighters have entered Syria has a great deal to do with the incitement that is carried out from countries of origin against specific Governments. That was the case of the brutal campaign in some European countries against Syria, which has led young people, for various reasons, to join the terrorist groups that are fighting the Government of President Bashar Al-Assad. We believe that the Security Council must act to combat this problem, because all of the social networks use technology platforms that are under the absolute control of the large information technology corporations.

Finally, Venezuela condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. There are no good or bad terrorists. We deplore the fact that the Security Council did not express regret when the terrorist group Da'esh occupied Palmyra last year and killed more than 500 people. They killed the archaeologist who was in charge of protecting this world cultural heritage and then began the destruction of the society of Palmyra. At the time, the Security Council was not able to deplore those acts. Nor was the Council, following the liberation of Palmyra, able to express its satisfaction at the liberation of the city of Palmyra and at the fact that its rebuilding had begun.

The Security Council has the responsibility of condemning all terrorist acts, whether or not for any reason they favour their national interests. We believe that all countries are victims of such terrorist acts. On a daily basis, Syria, Libya, Nigeria, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan and European countries all are affected by this phenomenon, which we must condemn.

Terrorism is a violent expression of the fascist extremist ideology with clear political objectives. Hence the response of the Security Council must be a political and military one. The Council has the responsibility of preventing conflicts that due to a lack of political response, as in the case of Palestine and Western Sahara, could turn into violent conflicts and even lead to the expansion of terrorism as a result of the frustration and despair of those peoples.

Lastly, our country supports an inclusive United Nations counter-terrorism strategy that would be the result of a broad-based debate in the General Assembly and in which the Security Council, as the organ responsible for international peace and security, would take part constructively, in strict adherence to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and in particular international humanitarian law.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

China thanks Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing. Currently, international terrorist activities are rampant. Terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Qaida are now better organized, and terrorists move across borders more frequently. They have a great variety of financing channels and are increasingly using new technologies such as the Internet and social media to spread their extremist ideas and engage in terrorist activities, thus posing a grave threat to international peace and security.

Terrorism is the common enemy of humankind. The international community should increase its

cooperation and take effective countermeasures while formulating new and targeted initiatives in the light of emerging trends and characteristics in the evolution of terrorism. The international community should use political, economic and cultural means in an integrated manner to address both the symptoms and the root causes of terrorism.

In this connection, China wishes to make the following six points.

First, it is necessary to increase political input in counterterrorism and forge a greater international consensus. The effects of terrorism transcend national boundaries. No country can deal with it on its own, and no country is immune to it. The international community should adhere to uniforms standard in counterterrorism and combat it with zero tolerance and no differentiation. All terrorist activities, under whatever pretext, against which our country and by whatever means, must be firmly suppressed.

Terrorism should not be linked to any particular ethnic group or religion. In the fight against terrorism, the leading role of the United Nations and its Security Council in particular must be given full play. The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations must be complied with and effective coordination enhanced so as to form a united international front against terrorism, suppress terrorists relentlessly and put them under great pressure.

Secondly, we must block the flow of terrorists across borders and be vigilant in an effective fight against those who return. The frequent movement of foreign terrorist fighters across borders constitutes a grave threat to the security of countries of origin, transit and destination. The international community must pay great attention to this problem, and the countries concerned should cooperate closely so as to strengthen border control and step up law-enforcement cooperation. They should create databases for counter-terrorism as soon as possible, share intelligence and destroy networks that facilitate the flow of terrorists.

All of the parties concerned should enhance communication, provide intelligence support for one another and step up law-enforcement cooperation so as to effectively respond to the threat of returning terrorists and ensure that terrorists are severely punished wherever they may try to seek safe haven.

Thirdly, update the means of response and effectively suppress the use of the Internet and social media for terrorism. The Internet and social media have now become an important platform for terrorist organizations. The international community should, in the light of the characteristics of cyberspace, adopt effective measures to resolutely combat the criminal activities of terrorist groups, including posting audio and video materials on the Web to disseminate extremist ideology, raising funds, promoting materials, recruiting for terrorist attacks and planning terrorist activities. All parties must comprehensively implement the relevant Security Council resolutions, strengthen the regulation of the Internet and suppress the use of the Internet for terrorist activities. The relevant organs of the United Nations should identify the right breaking points and points of action and come up with new ideas and initiatives to promote international cooperation and strengthen coordination in cyberregulation.

Fourthly, there is a need to strengthen comprehensive cooperation and eliminate sources of funds and weapons for terrorists. Terrorist groups such as ISIL depend heavily on the exploitation of natural resources as a way to finance their operations. The international community should effectively implement resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015), among others; strengthen cooperation in the regulation of the financial and other sectors; and effectively prevent terrorist groups from raising funds through trafficking in oil and cultural relics.

Countries should be highly vigilant against the real threat of nuclear, biological and chemical terrorism, strengthen their coordination and cooperation, focus on scaling up the security of the relevant materials, boosting international information-sharing and improving the relevant laws and regulations so as to close the Internet channels by which terrorist organizations attempt to acquire nuclear, biological and chemical materials.

Fifthly, intensify prevention and upstream checkpoints in the fight against terrorism. All countries must give serious attention to the dissemination of violent extremism and incitement of national and religious hatred by terrorist organizations, in an effort to comprehensively implement Security Council resolution 1624 (2005). Countries should adopt robust legislation to effectively combat incitement to terrorism, and suppress, according to the law, the dissemination of violent extremist ideas.

Sixthly, countries should work together to build a new type of international relations with win-win cooperation at its core; establish a common, holistic cooperative and sustainable security concept; resolutely promote global security governance; promote universal development and prosperity; and engage in cultural exchange so as to achieve harmony while respecting differences among different cultures. Countries should treat each other as equals, drawing inspiration from each other in order to create a social and cultural atmosphere in which different nations, cultures and religions coexist harmoniously. Attention should be given to promoting the political settlement of regional conflicts, maintaining an international environment conducive to peace, stability and sustained development and eliminating the breeding grounds for terrorism at an early date.

China is an important member of the international counter-terrorism camp. The East Turkestan terrorist forces, represented by the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, is a real threat facing China today. In recent years, the East Turkestan terrorism movement has been constantly inciting and organizing terrorist activities that have seriously threatened not only China's national security, but also regional security and stability. The Chinese President, Mr. Xi Jinping, has stressed that China will fight terrorists on both the domestic and the international fronts simultaneously and will further enhance its international counter-terrorism cooperation. In that regard, China has established counter-terrorism cooperation mechanisms with over 10 countries and engaged in substantive cooperation with them. China is also deeply involved in multilateral cooperation mechanisms, such as the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, thus making an important contribution to the international fight against terrorism. China will continue to take an active part in and push forward bilateral and multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation, scale up counter-terrorism intelligence sharing and provide, to the best of its ability, matériel and capacity-building assistance in the fight against terrorism to other developing countries.

China is willing to continue to uphold the spirit of mutual respect and cooperation on an equal footing, work with all other countries, strengthen exchanges and cooperation, and strive to advance cooperation on international counter-terrorism in order to enable us to build a tightly woven network against terrorist organizations and forces, which will leave no blind spot for terrorism, thus ensuring regional and global peace and security.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber. I would also like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable speed so that interpretation may be provided accurately.

I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Gómez Camacho (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I would like to greatly thank your delegation for having convened this debate. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I would like to begin by reiterating that my country firmly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Likewise, we are trying to adopt effective measures against terrorism, at the national, regional and international levels, while fully respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. All States have an obligation to act in strict compliance with international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law.

It is crucial that terrorism not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. Political, religious and community leaders must guarantee that messages issued about terrorism and how to tackle it promote tolerance, respect and the culture of peace, avoiding the dissemination of xenophobic and discriminatory messages.

Since 2002, Mexico has led the initiative on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism (General Assembly resolution 68/178), both in New York and Geneva. General Assembly resolution 70/148 reiterates the commitment of the international community to respect its obligations in that sphere. It also reiterates the importance of civil society and humanitarian organizations, as well as the right to privacy and the participation of women, in formulating counter-terrorist measures.

In the light of the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which is to take place in June, I would like to make the following four specific points:

First, greater coherence and coordination are needed among the various United Nations offices that make up the Strategy. That means reviewing the Strategy's architecture and the definition of mandates.

Secondly, we must improve communication and coordination between the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

Thirdly, it is important to guarantee that the efforts of the Strategy are properly based on the four action pillars, incorporating a broader agenda in terms development, security and respect for human rights.

Fourthly, we must always favour a preventive approach. That means addressing the causes that lead to terrorism through two main actions: enhancing the capacity-building of States and strengthening development.

While it is understandable that we are trying to prevent violent extremism so as to avoid the proliferation of terrorism, it is crucial to think about the implications. Mexico is concerned by the temptation to merge the two concepts, which could lead to an overly broad application of counter-terrorist measures and potentially punish types of behaviour that under no circumstances can be described as terrorist acts.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Al-Mouallimi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for presiding over the Security Council for this month. I am sure that your able leadership and experience will produce positive results. Allow me to express our appreciation for the convening of this high-level open debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing, which was most valuable.

Terrorism is one of the most significant challenges facing various communities, individuals and States, whatever their religion or ethnicity may be. It is a phenomenon that garners significant financing and is an obstacle to development. Terrorism knows no nationality nor country of origin. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia emphasizes once again, therefore, its rejection and condemnation of all terrorist acts, in all forms and manifestations, whatsoever their objectives may be. They are heinous crimes rejected by Islam, crimes without any basis or foundation. We reiterate the fact that extremely violent hate crimes that terrorize Muslims across the world are being committed. Some believe that these Muslims are responsible for the actions of terrorists. Such a belief is unjust, creates discrimination against Muslims, and increases both the danger of terrorism as well as its spread.

We reiterate the importance of our cooperation and participation in international and bilateral efforts to combat terrorism and its financing, as well as to extirpate the roots of this phenomenon, in particular the application of all Security Council resolutions relevant to the fight against terrorism.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is working to combat terrorism and has always rejected the phenomenon at the national and international levels. We have grappled with it nationally and condemned it internationally. We have also worked to curtail its sources of funding. Those efforts include the criminalization of acts of terrorism, incitement to terrorism and travel to conflict zones, and measures to address terrorism financing. My country's efforts illustrate the importance of protecting local communities against terrorists, and putting a stop to terrorist cells. Security measures have enabled us to be proactive in fighting attempts to spread terrorism and to combat those who finance it, who represent an equally important threat.

The Saudi public has roundly rejected terrorism. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has played a leading role at the international level in calling on the international community to combat terrorism. We have called for the adoption of a global action plan in the framework of international legislation so as to eradicate terrorism and to uphold the sovereignty, security and stability of countries. We have hosted several international conferences on this topic, and participated in the creation of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. Furthermore, we recently announced our contribution of $10 million to establish a specialized centre for nuclear counterterrorism at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) headquarters. Moreover, we announced a contribution of €500,000 to the modernization of the IAEA laboratories in Seibersdorf. In addition, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was one of the first countries to support the international resolutions on nuclear peace, having ratified the Convention on the Physical

Protection of Nuclear Material. We are also members of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

The Muslim world is the first to suffer from the impact of official, organized terrorism arising from the occupation and seizure of land and property, as well as terrorism that uses religion as a pretext. There has been a failure to denounce the official organized terrorism perpetrated by Israel and the impunity it enjoys with regard to the crimes committed by its colonial army and terrorist settlers. Those crimes include systematic killings, occupation, Judaization and ethnic cleansing, all of which may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity. The failure to condemn such terrorism ultimately leads to its exacerbation and spread. Moreover, the policy of double standards adopted by some countries and the upholding of the interests of the strongest — setting aside equality — are all factors that serve to exacerbate violence, terrorism and extremism.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted a very firm position with its Arab brothers against the policy of interference adopted by Iran in the Arab region. That policy seeks to amplify conflicts and crises in the region, export the revolution and create conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, violence and terrorism that uses religion as a pretext. That policy seeks to destabilize the region and to support terrorists and intercommunal conflicts. It also seeks to support militias, armies and terrorist groups, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, and other religious militias. Iran has also created terrorist groups in Bahrain that are trained and financed by the Guardians of the Revolution. Furthermore, Iran continues its attempts to smuggle explosive materials and weapons into Yemen. That is a flagrant violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Following the exacerbation of the terrorist threat in various Muslim countries, we announced the creation of an Islamic alliance composed of 34 countries to combat terrorism. The alliance will be an effective international partner at all levels — cultural, ideological, financial and technological — to strengthen security. The alliance will be a solid force against terrorist organizations. Moreover, my country is ready to participate in any international effort to eradicate Da'esh and Al-Qaida in Syria and any other country.

On numerous occasions, my delegation has warned about the despicable crimes perpetrated by spoilers in Syria and foreign groups that use religion as a pretext there and create conditions conducive to the spread of the actions of Da'esh and the Al-Nusra Front, and have exacerbated terrorism in the region. I wish to call attention to the fact that in spite of the unstinting efforts made to stop acts of aggression in Syria, which have been committed in violation of resolutions 2254 (2015) and 2268 (2016), Syrian forces have violated the cessation of hostilities 900 times, leading to the deaths of more than 150 civilians. Furthermore, Syrian forces have targeted hospitals, schools and civilians, and used such indiscriminate weapons as barrel bombs. They continue to besiege civilians and impede the transport of humanitarian assistance. The pursuit of such actions could undermine the agreement on a cessation of hostilities.

We reiterate that the fight against terrorism in Syria and the region is inextricably linked to a political solution on a provisional Government entity, in line with the first Geneva communiqué (S/2012/523, annex). Such an entity would have operational global prerogatives and lay the foundations for the future of Syria — a Syria that rejects terrorism, violence, intolerance and extremism, and that has no place for those who have killed Syrian people.

The protection of civilians against occupation and systematic killings, the rejection of the spread of sectarian and ethnic conflicts, and the upholding of international instruments are not merely moral obligations; rather, they are vital prerequisites, the absence of which would lead to the spread of terrorism. Such actions should enjoy priority among international counter-terrorism efforts. My country's delegation will therefore maintain its international cooperation in order to ensure the security and stability of the region and the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary.

Ms. Bogyay (Hungary): I wish first to thank China for organizing this very important open debate.

Hungary, of course, aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later on behalf of the European Union, but I should like to say a few words in my national capacity.

Hungary truly believes that terrorism is a global problem that has to be tackled globally. We always say that terrorists cannot win, and we can counter terrorism only through the broadest possible international cooperation and with the help fo a comprehensive

set of instruments, ranging from security measures to preventive tools. Hungary believes that all acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation and wherever, whenever and by whomever they are committed. Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

Hungary believes that the United Nations is the best placed to play a leading role in the coordination of international counter-terrorism cooperation. It is the best placed to assess and monitor international priorities, set international strategies and policies, and play an important role in capacity-building. In this regard, we fully support the all-of-United Nations approach laid out in the Secretary- General's recent Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism. We also believe that the upcoming review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy will offer a unique opportunity to reach consensus on the robust framework of international cooperation and coordination that is needed to counter terrorism today.

Hungary supports all international and regional efforts aimed at cutting off the sources of terrorism. The Hungarian criminal code criminalizes terrorism financing and money-laundering for such purposes. We believe that the efforts and specific activities of the relevant financial intelligence units of Member States must be harmonized on the basis of shared information and joint investigations, as appropriate, to more effectively hamper the capacity of terrorist organizations to function and survive.

The most recent tragedies in Brussels have also painfully reminded us of the importance of curbing the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. More effective border control is needed if we are to be able to manage the security threat caused by foreign terrorist fighter returnees. Interoperable databases and real-time information-sharing should help more us to effectively monitor the travel of foreign terrorist fighters and ensure swift action by all stakeholders when needed.

A comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy cannot be based solely on security measures. Enhanced preventive measures are also critical elements for success. Good governance, the rule of law, full respect for human rights, quality education, youth participation, intercultural dialogue all play an important role in preventing radicalization. We must also engage all members of society, including religious leaders, women leaders, leaders in the arts, music and sports in this regard.

One of the greatest challenges of our time is to create an Internet that is a free and safe environment for our children and youth and prevents terrorists from exploiting the Internet for their own purposes. We must learn from examples of responsible online activism that effectively engages young people to contribute to inclusive societies and a sustainable future for all. We support all efforts aimed at confronting terrorists' distorted propaganda, including the activities of those Muslim communities, Islamic leaders, imams and other Islamic opinion-leaders who commit their actions to making a clear difference between Islam as a religion and Da'esh propaganda, which goes against it. We are also pleased that various service and content providers are open to cooperating with the international community when terrorist online content is reported to them.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I give the floor to Mr. António.

Mr. António: Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Sir, upon your assumption of the Security Council presidency for this month, and for convening this important and very timely debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his very insightful briefing.

Today's debate is taking place against the backdrop of ever-increasing challenges in the area of peace and security due to the rise of terrorism and violent extremism. The recent terrorist attacks in many capitals of the world, which shocked the conscience of the international community, came as a further illustration of the magnitude of the challenges at hand. I reiterate the African Union's strong and unequivocal rejection of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as its strong condemnation of all terrorist acts, which cannot be justified under any circumstances. I once again express the continent's solidarity with the affected countries and victims, whose plight should be fully acknowledged and addressed. It is also our strong belief that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or civilization. Likewise, terrorism should not be equated with the legitimate struggle of peoples under foreign occupation to achieve their inalienable right to self-determination.

In Africa, terrorism and violent extremism still represent the most serious threat to peace and

security. This threat has, in the past decade, assumed greater proportions by expanding geographically and displaying unprecedented levels of violence in various parts of the continent. In the face of these challenges, the African Union (AU) and its regional mechanisms have remained committed and actively engaged in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. The relevant AU policy organs have articulated a comprehensive framework for the implementation of AU and international counter-terrorism instruments in Africa. The 1999 Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its 2004 Supplementary Protocol, as well as the 2002 plan of action and the establishment of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, continue to provide a sound legal and institutional basis for enhanced cooperation among member States.

The African Union has also undertaken numerous capacity-building initiatives to enhance the capacity of its member States to combat terrorism. The commitment of the African Union was further demonstrated during the recent Summit of the AU Peace and Security Council, held on 29 January, which, among other things, reviewed the AU efforts against terrorism. The Summit reaffirmed the continued relevance of the instruments adopted by the Organization of African Unity and the AU in past years and called for renewed efforts to combat extremism and radicalizing religious interpretations that foster intolerance and violence.

The Summit also agreed to pursue and intensify efforts to support the establishment of regional cooperation mechanisms aimed at addressing specific transnational threats in different parts of the continent. In that regard, it is worth recalling that a number of security cooperation mechanisms have already been established to encourage better coordination and information exchange among member States, notably within the frameworks of the Nouakchott Process, the Sahel Fusion and Liaison Unit, the Djibouti Process for Eastern Africa, and the Eastern Africa Fusion and Liaison Unit. In that regard, the progress made on the ground by the troop-contributing countries to the African Union Mission in Somalia in the fight against the terrorist group Al-Shabaab should be acknowledged and fully supported in every way by the international community. Any reduction in its resources will have a very bad impact on the gains realized so far. The recent operationalization of the African Mechanism for Police Cooperation will also greatly enhance the continent's capacity to address the threat posed by terrorism and transnational organized crime.

With regard to the issue of financing terrorism, the African Union has frequently expressed its deep concerns about the reported financial flows coming from outside the continent in support of terrorist and extremist groups, and has stressed the importance of investigating the matter in order to determine the extent of the problem and make recommendations on how to address it comprehensively. It should also be noted that the African Union prohibits the payment of ransoms in exchange for hostages and requests that such acts be considered crimes.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the commitment of the AU to fully shouldering its share of the responsibility in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. We should also be mindful of the fact that we all have that responsibility and that we must act collectively to confront this scourge, which not only undermines international peace and security but also the very values and principles that have long characterized our diverse and democratic societies.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Morales López (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the Chinese presidency of the Council for its initiative in holding today's open debate and for the concept note accompanying it (S/2016/306, annex).

Effective and comprehensive action in the face of threats such as terrorism, violent extremism and foreign terrorist fighters is becoming increasingly urgent. Every day we see people from various countries and regions around the world fighting in conflicts that are totally alien to them or for violent causes in situations far from their native lands. The ways in which terrorism, violent extremism and hate speech have recently spread affects our ability, and that of future generations, to live together.

We have an ongoing duty to build social and cultural environments that do not glorify violence. Terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, ethnic group, community or nationality, and we must therefore join forces to combat terrorism comprehensively and objectively. All our actions should be based firmly on respect for international standards and the rule of law. That is the only way we can make

progress and thereby prevent this threat from continuing and growing stronger in future. As the Secretary-General said earlier, it is only when we respect the standards of human rights and international humanitarian law that we can ensure that the strategies we use to fight this scourge do not become counterproductive and worsen the effect on the communities we want to protect.

Colombia is part of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and promotes the adoption, implementation and application of the various international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, as well as the relevant Security Council resolutions, as an effective way of preventing, sanctioning and eliminating terrrorism through close cooperation. The strong links between terrorism and the various forms and manifestations of transnational organized crime have enabled terrorist organizations to expand both their size and scope. The international community must deal effectively with the economy of terrorism, with particular emphasis on its finances and the laundering of the proceeds from its illicit activities.

The shared challenge to us all that terrorism represents is evolving daily, and we can fight it only through the concerted efforts of Member States and our Organization. As the concept note indicates, the gravity and importance of a phenomenon such as this make it vital that the Security Council shoulder its principal responsibility for addressing international peace and security and promote cooperation with the General Assembly and the Secretariat, with a view to joining forces for efforts that can lead to terrorism's definitive neutralization and to the climate of international peace and security that the world needs if it is to make progress on development.

The fight against terrorism cannot succeed in the continued absence of a general convention on international terrorism. Years of discussion have already been expended on efforts to formulate such a convention, and the seriousness of the problem of international terrorism demands that act urgently to make the necessary decisions, however difficult they may be. A convention would enable us to complement existing instruments, bridge gaps that remain and strengthen the internationally binding legal mechanisms for tackling this crime. Columbia emphasizes how important it is to promote open and inclusive consultations in this multilateral forum in order to achieve a speedy agreement on a general convention, and we believe that a consensus text would be a sign of the commitment of all Member States to the shared benefit that the elimination of terrorism represents.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Akbaruddin (India): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. Today, terrorism is a global phenomenon that no country or society can remain immune or indifferent to. According to authoritative accounts, 2,850 people have lost their lives, and nearly 4,000 more have been injured, in terrorist-related violence in 38 countries during the first three months of this year alone. In effect, terrorism is extracting a deadly price. We therefore welcome your initiative in holding this debate as one step in a global approach to a collective challenge.

While the international community has made progress in evolving a rule-based order for managing many aspects of globalization, it still has some way to go in addressing evolving security threats such as terrorism. Today terrorists are globally networked. They have expanded their footprint and mutated into hydra-headed monsters. Alas, the international community's counter-terrorism efforts are still in an embryonic form.

The United Nations is uniquely placed to provide the platform necessary for real cooperation and coordination in our common fight against terrorism. Such cooperation should include establishing standards and making rules as well as formulating practical and specific ways to counter terrorism. That is why we feel that the actions of the Security Council alone, however effective they may be in responding to identified threats, cannot provide a sufficient response to the global scourge of terror.

To put the counter-terror efforts that many Governments now undertake in a broader normative construct, the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism is an imperative. It would put in place a framework that enables local action to fit with global norms. It would generate coherence in national responses against what is a challenge to all of us collectively. Even as we work to advance the prospects of a normative framework in the form of a comprehensive convention, there are several other steps that can be taken to delegitimize terrorism.

First, we agree with the proposition in the concept note (S/2016/306, annex) that all terrorist acts are criminal, no matter whenever, wherever or by whomsoever they are committed. The world today does not accept any cause as justification for terrorism. Every outcome document referring to terrorism therefore needs to reinforce this approach. Statements of solidarity when attacks happen and expressions of policy independent of happenings have a value that is often underestimated.

Secondly, frameworks such as the Financial Action Task Force, which sets standards with respect to combating money laundering and terrorist financing or the Egmont Group, which is an informal network of financial intelligence units, are important elements in degrading and defeating terrorist organizations.

Thirdly, we need to effectively control upstream and downstream activities associated with terrorism and also address the ecosystem that spawns terrorism. We therefore support the formulation of a legal framework to criminalize foreign terrorist fighters.

Fourthly, in terms of tangible support, the Security Council's sanctions committees need to foster greater responsiveness to Member States' requests for preventive listings to counter terror. They also need to follow up complaints against violations by listed individuals and entities more vigorously.

Fifthly, the procedures of unanimity and anonymity of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999),1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida,and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011), need to be revisited. Currently, they result in a lack of accountability under the cloak and garb of unanimity and anonymity. Each of the 15 members now has a veto and none except these 15 members is told which it is that has wielded the veto in a specific instance. The general membership of the United Nations is never, ever formally informed of how and why requests for listing terrorists are not acceded to. Counter-terror mechanisms such as the sanctions committees, which act on behalf of the international community, need to build trust, not engender impunity by the use of this form of a hidden veto.

I hope that deliberations of this debate will feed in positively to the ongoing consolidation of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism and the upcoming discussions on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Although we have made progress on some fronts, forging a broad-based consensus on an issue like countering terrorism is a test we have yet to pass at the United Nations. Yet, it is also a test that none of us can afford to fail.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7671

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7671st meeting
Friday, 15 April 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Egypt	Mr. Mahmoud
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2016/305)

Letter dated 13 April 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/342)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-10635 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2016/305)

Letter dated 13 April 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/342)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Mr. Omar Hilale, Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Morocco.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/305, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/342, which contains a letter dated 13 April 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, you have before you the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/305) on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), which presents to the Council the significant process made in the country over the past few months.

Today, I would like to update the Council on key developments that have taken place since the issuance of the report. On 30 March, Faustin-Archange Touadéra was sworn in as President of the Central African Republic, and that step formally ended the country's transition phase. The promulgation of the new Constitution by the outgoing Head of State of the Transition on the very day of the inauguration symbolized in the strongest possible terms a return to constitutional order and marked an important milestone after three years of severe and arduous crisis.

On 31 March, the day after the inauguration of President Touadéra, the country held the second round of legislative elections. Those elections went off peacefully throughout the country, which I think is worth noting. The final results of this round were announced on 5 April, with the result that some key political figures, including some former presidential candidates Dologuélé, Méckassoua and Ziguélé, won parliamentary seats. By-elections will have to be organized for some 10 constituencies in the country where formal results from the second round were invalidated. In the interim, transitional institutions such as the Transitional National Council and the Transitional Constitutional Court will remain in place until the legislative process is completed and the Court has validated the final results of all legislative elections, which is expected to take place later this month.

Meanwhile, President Touadéra has moved quickly to form a new Government. On 11 April, last Monday, following the appointment of Prime Minister Sarandji a week earlier, on 2 April, the President issued a decree on the formation of the Government. The new Government is much leaner than the previous one, with some 23 ministerial posts, including four women. It is also worth underscoring that four appointees are members of the Muslim community. The new Government — it should also be mentioned — includes representatives from each of the country's 16 prefectures. On the flip side, no representatives of armed groups are among the new members of the Government.

I would now like to share some impressions from my recent visit to the Central African Republic to attend the inauguration of President Touadéra on behalf of the Secretary-General. Like many others, I was very much struck by the President's attachment to democratic values. He vowed publicly, for example, to respect the newly promulgated Constitution, including the two-term limit for presidential mandates. He also made it clear that he was prepared to work tirelessly towards national unity. When I met with the President, he told me that his priorities for the country would be to re-establish security, with a particular focus on

disarming armed groups. He also said that it was a priority for him to advance reconciliation, economic and social development and good governance. He robustly reaffirmed that he is determined to continue working very closely with international partners.

During my visit, I personally witnessed the important progress made in the Central African Republic towards healing past rifts among the various communities in the country. As an illustration, when I visited the Boeing district in Bangui — an outlying district where Muslim and Christian communities were until very recently viciously fighting each another and causing much damage — to my great astonishment I found the two communities engaged in a local reconciliation process, which stands as a model and is supported by MINUSCA. This is worth noting as a positive step. The Ambassador of the United States was also in Bangui on that day and he joined me in the discussion with the communities in Boeing.

If I may say so, it is very heartwarming to see how, in the space of a few months, the attitudes of the communities have changed so much. Experiences such as these — and there are many I could point to in the country — can serve as a basis for the long-term process of reconciliation. I think that it also shows the resilience of the Central African people and their widely-held feeling that they have to work collectively peace and unity.

As I said at the outset, the Central African Republic has reached a critical milestone with the successful holding of free and fair elections. If I may, I would say that in that part of the world there are not that many presidential elections where the winner is not known in advance. There are few elections that take place without difficulties or whose results are not challenged by the loser or where the post-election transition is smooth. I therefore think that the Central African Republic elections serve as an excellent model.

That marks the conclusion of the transition and the start of a new phase for the country. The new Government must now deliver tangible progress for the Central African people because the expectations are high — expectations of peace and of lasting security, and, simply, of the improvement of living conditions for people. I told the President that the first 100 days will be decisive.

Throughout the electoral process, there was positive momentum upon which, I think, we must build, based on the principles and the agreements reached last May during the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation. It is the Government's responsibility to work for the establishment of a lasting peace and stability that will benefit all citizens. And rapid tangible progress must be achieved in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. I would highlight — as I believe it is important — the repatriation of too high a number of refugees and internally displaced persons, which will not be easy. However, expectations are high, and this will be important.

What will also be important is the launch of key reforms in the security and defence sector, that is, with regard to the future of the Central African armed forces. To stimulate economic development, which has been a problem for decades, the State's authority must be extended throughout the country. I understand that all the prefects are already in place in the 16 prefectures. I also understand that almost all of the sub-prefects are in place. However, that must then be reinforced in the various administrations. It is also necessary to improve access to basic security services, strengthen the judicial and penal chain, make progress in the fight against impunity — an element important to national reconciliation — and ensure universal respect for human rights. As far as MINUSCA is concerned, it will continue to provide its full support to the new Government as it works to realize those changes.

As I said previously, very significant progress has been achieved over the last two years. Although considerable challenges remain, I think we can be reasonably hopeful. What is important now is that we continue to focus on the key priorities. It is also important that the various international partners of the Central African Republic work together to ensure that the measures taken have as large an impact as possible. We have a window of opportunity to help the Central African Republic. We must not allow that window to close. The opportunity must not be wasted.

I have just spoken of the positive developments; now I must mention the absolutely catastrophic and shocking increase in allegations of sexual misconduct by the MINUSCA forces and international forces. It is all deeply regrettable and appalling. Certain cases are extremely shocking and shameful. It is a genuine scourge. To address that scourge, as members of the Council are aware, MINUSCA has established a transparent and victim-centred approach. In addition, the Secretary-General's Special Coordinator on Improving United

Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, recently travelled to the Central African Republic to examine the best ways to better support MINUSCA.

In parallel, my counterpart, the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Mr. Atul Khare, and I have engaged with all of the contingents and the countries that provide uniformed personnel to MINUSCA. I did that personally in Bangui. Mr. Khare and I did it together in New York in order to insist, more than ever, on the imperative need for swift investigation and, of course, once the facts have been established, for deterrent punishments for the perpetrators. We stand firmly with the victims, who have demonstrated courage in coming forward and reporting the events in question. We continue to do everything possible to ensure that those victims receive the assistance they need and that justice is delivered as quickly as possible.

I take this opportunity to repeat to all troop- and police-contributing countries that we are redoubling our efforts to really address these events, which are profoundly unacceptable. It is a must that we do everything possible to put an end to these practices, which are committed by a handful of individuals. Their actions utterly compromise the image and the quality of the contributions and courage demonstrated by the great majority of their colleagues. I am personally, along with my colleagues, very directly and actively engaged in the handling of this problem.

In conclusion, as the members of the Council are aware, MINUSCA's mandate is set to expire on 30 April. The Secretary-General has recommended a technical roll-over of the mandate to allow the Secretariat to consult in some depth with the new Central African authorities before making recommendations to the Council on the definitive mandate, which should take the new situation into account, to the extent possible.

I would also like to inform the Council that it is our intention to work very closely with the Central African authorities as well our international partners in order to establish what we sometimes refer to as the compact. That compact is a framework of mutual engagement to be formalized between the United Nations and the Central African authorities and its international partners, including the major donors. I talked about it with President Touadéra. He seemed very interested, in principle. We will therefore focus on that. I consider it a pilot project within the framework of the Security Council, but something that should hopefully serve to consolidate the activities of the international community during the next two or three years in the Central African Republic, with a focus on accepted priorities. I believe that with benchmarks and periodic reviews, every action and all the actors involved in the country should become more effective. Of course our colleagues working to consolidate peace are fully involved in this process, which we will continue over the next few months.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ladous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to brief the Council on behalf of the Peacebuilding Commission in my capacity as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration.

I too would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, for the work accomplished and efforts made in fulfilling his mandate. I would also like to thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous for his exhaustive and objectively optimistic briefing on the situation in the Central African Republic.

The Central African Republic configuration would like to express its satisfaction. We endorse the conclusions of Mr. Ladsous' briefing with regard to the peaceful conclusion of the political transition and the return to constitutional order in the Central African Republic. Building on the positive momentum generated by the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation, the Central African people have clearly and strongly expressed their longing for peace and stability, thereby contributing to the conclusion of the transition. Moreover, presidential candidates have demonstrated patriotism and unity but also responsibility by prioritizing the greater interests of the nation by complying with the code of good conduct and accepting the electoral results. Those peaceful elections, in the situation that exists in the Central African Republic, would not have been possible without such a dynamic, combined with the strong engagement and the coordination of efforts of all stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels.

As mentioned in the letter of 3 March that the configuration sent to Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera to congratulate him on his election, I would like to reiterate our commitment to continuing to provide full support to the creation of an environment conducive to peacebuilding. We also welcome the appointment as Prime Minister on 2 April of Mr. Simplice Sarandji and on 11 April of the members of the new Government, four of whom, we are pleased to note, are women.

The Central African Republic has come a long way since its relapse in 2013. With the end of the political transition, the country is now at a critical, indeed historic juncture, and our collective and timely support for the people of the Central African Republic and its new authorities is more important than ever if we are to ensure that the priorities for peacebuilding will be pursued. Those goals must be closely aligned with the national priorities outlined by the President in his inauguration address — a restoration of stability to the entire territory through the implementation of the processes of disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration and security sector reform; promotion of national reconciliation and cohesion; reform of the public finance system and the productive sectors; and, lastly, rehabilitation of the country's public services.

For its part, the configuration, together with the international community, has provided support to the Central African authorities before and throughout the transitional period in overcoming the challenges resulting from the country's volatile situation. In that context, it has also played a key role in supporting the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in their efforts to raise the international community's awareness of the situation and challenges in the Central African Republic and to advocate for the holding of timely elections, particularly in relation to mobilizing resources for the electoral basket fund. Furthermore, with regard to fighting impunity, in partnership with the United Nations Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections Areas in the Rule of Law in Post-Conflict and Other Crisis Situations, the configuration established a reference group aimed at providing a supporting platform for re-establishing the penal system and setting up the Special Criminal Court. The next meeting will deal with the modalities of recruiting international magistrates for the Special Criminal Court in order to enable it to begin its sessions.

As this new and historic phase begins, the activities of the Central African Republic configuration will have to adapt to the new situation and be implemented in a way that will ensure the appropriate and needed support for the country's long-term political stability and economic prosperity. To that end, its activities should conform to three closely linked preconditions — they should be action-oriented, timely and strictly aligned with the priorities outlined by the national authorities. Apart from this, our work should be structured around three phases.

First, in the short term, we should facilitate a rapid and coordinated response to the challenges that the new authorities encounter from the very beginning of their mandate, since we know that the people will have high expectations of improvement in their living conditions. Our collective support should therefore emphasize efforts that let the people see immediate results from the peace dividend, especially in the area of their basic public service needs. In that regard, the configuration will ensure that the various assessments of urgent needs and initiatives that are currently under way or being planned by the principal stakeholders are coherent and coordinated. The aim is to avoid a fragmented approach within the donor community and to build positive momentum for a successful future donor conference.

Secondly, in the medium term, we should continue and strengthen coordination with the national authorities and principal stakeholders in order to ensure the implementation of a national development plan. The configuration is also ready to support the various types of engagement planned or currently under way in the Central African Republic. Mechanisms based on mutual engagement of the United Nations with the country, such as Global Compact projects, or evaluations aimed at identifying appropriate forms of support, such as the World Bank's 2014 fragility assessment, which was recently updated, are some specific examples. Moreover, the principal Central African Republic donors are engaged in multiple projects, along with the Peacebuilding Fund, which has been providing the country with critical and timely financial support for the past few years.

Thirdly, in the long term, we should ensure the establishment of a stable and inclusive political environment that will promote a lasting peace through an effective national reconciliation effort that reaches every sector of society, with no exceptions. On the economic front, we should support the identification of

the key sectors that can ensure economic growth and recovery and encourage international investment. In that regard, the Peacebuilding Commission's experience in areas such as the mobilization of domestic resources could benefit the country significantly. All of these efforts — short-, medium- and long-term — are aimed at supporting the establishment of a lasting peace and paving the way for the reconstruction and development of a country that has been devastated by a long crisis. The humanitarian situation is still worrying, particularly as regards internally displaced persons and refugees. We call on humanitarian organizations to continue to intervene in support of these people who have lost everything.

I plan over the next few weeks to visit the Central African Republic and to meet with the principal international and regional stakeholders in order to discuss these initiatives further and decide on the best way for the configuration to support those efforts. Indeed, this type of situation is where the role of the Peacebuilding Commission can make a key contribution as a catalyst for initiatives and by contributing to a coherent and coordinated approach. Another important aspect of our mandate will be to ensure that the Central African Republic continues to be a top priority for the international community.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the country is at a critical juncture for its future. The Central African Republic has the potential to become a success story, after all the previous attempts that have failed to address the root causes of its instability. The gravity of the country's recent conflict is a strong incentive for the international community to rethink its engagement with the country in order to turn the page once and for all.

Lastly, the configuration welcomes the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/305) regarding the technical renewal of MINUSCA's mandate. The proposal makes sense in the context of the country's current situation and, as Mr. Ladsous just discussed, will give the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which is about to conduct a strategic assessment of the Mission, enough time to engage fully with the new authorities. As we all know, the success of any long-term solution in a post-conflict situation requires strong national ownership. That is an absolute essential for the Central African Republic as much as it is an obligation for the configuration, the Security Council and the international community to help the country to achieve it.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Hilale for his briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7672

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7672nd meeting
Friday, 15 April 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. Gasso Matoses
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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16-10641 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Yemen to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; and Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed.

Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to brief the Security Council once again on the latest developments in Yemen. This briefing falls on the eve of the next round of face-to-face talks in Kuwait, where I hope the parties will come to an agreement on a clear way to end the violence and devastation in Yemen.

As a result of months of intense negotiations, on 9 April I received letters from the Government of Yemen, the Ansar Allah and the General People's Congress, confirming their commitment to a nationwide cessation of hostilities. The cessation of hostilities began at midnight on 10 April, and I hope that it will provide an environment conducive to the upcoming talks, offer an opportunity for expanded humanitarian assistance, and provide a rare ray of hope to Yemenis longing for a return to peace.

The de-escalation and coordination committee established in the last round of peace talks in Switzerland has been working hard to prevent violations and avoid any military escalation. I commend the parties for their commitment to the work of the committee and thank the European Union, Germany, the Netherlands, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States for providing training to members of the committee and support for its operations.

The agreement on the cessation of hostilities also raised local levels of support. The Government of Yemen and Ansar Allah have nominated local committees in militarily contested areas to work with the de-escalation and coordination committee to ensure better compliance with the cessation of hostilities. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia bore witness to the signing of an agreement to form such committees upon the request of both parties. Most local communities are not yet fully functional, but we are working to ensure that they become more effective in the coming days.

The early days of the cessation of hostilities witnessed a notable decrease in the level of military violence in most parts of the country. However, there are have also been an alarming number of serious violations, particularly in Al-Jawf, Amran, Marib and Ta'izz. Fighting in Ta'izz continues to claim civilian casualties, and I am concerned that a spiral of escalating violence could threaten the success of the peace process. However, the events of the past two weeks have given me hope. I should like to acknowledge the courage displayed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Ansar Allah in agreeing to settle border disputes. Both parties confirm that these agreements pave the way for a general cessation of hostilities in Yemen.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has supported both the Government of Yemen and the Houthis in signing a landmark agreement aimed at supporting the cessation of hostilities and the work of the de-escalation and coordination committee, as well as the local de-escalation committees, and supports the role of the United Nations. The role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been praised by both parties, which represents an important positive development in the current crisis.

The humanitarian situation of the Yemeni people continues to deteriorate, causing additional human misery. As part of their commitments under the cessation of hostilities, the parties have pledged to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law and ensure unhindered access to humanitarian agencies. I call on all parties to support the important work being carried out by the humanitarian agencies. There is no doubt that humanitarian workers will do their utmost to deliver assistance to those in need, in particular in affected hard-to-reach areas. My colleague, Assistant Secretary-General Kyung-wha Kang, will brief the Council further on these efforts.

There is no doubt that Yemen's rapidly deteriorating economy is further undermining the humanitarian situation. In order to help Yemen maintain its economic stability in this crisis, I have also pursued agreements seeking to maintain the operations of key State institutions, including the central bank, on which many people depend. Re-establishing institutions like the Social Welfare Fund, which provides cash transfers to the most vulnerable sectors of the population, will help prevent the disintegration of the social fabric and extreme poverty and accelerate economic recovery once an agreement is reached.

On the security front, Yemen is facing a brutal war, on the one hand, and a significant terrorist threat, on the other. The Yemeni people continue to witness the devastation caused by terrorist attacks throughout the country. In my recent visit to Brussels, which suffered a tragic terrorist attack on 22 March, I noted that the absence of the State in many parts of Yemen has encouraged the expansion of terrorist groups, creating a long-term threat to the country. The current cessation of hostilities will help to create an environment more conducive to preventing further radicalization and violent extremism, but much more needs to be done in order to prevent irreparable damage to the future of Yemen.

I take this opportunity to note that this morning the Government of Yemen, supported by coalition forces, regained control of Al Hawtah, the capital of Lahij governorate, from Al-Qaida forces, which seized control of the city last summer.

My team and I have been engaged in extensive discussions over the past few months with Yemeni leaders and regional and international partners on the future direction of the country and possible outcomes of the Kuwait talks. I met with President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour four times, and wish to thank him for his support for my mission. I also met with senior Yemeni Government officials. I visited Sana'a several times for meetings with representatives of Ansar Allah and the General Popular Congress; His Royal Highness the Deputy Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud; the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Jordan; and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia. I also engaged in telephone calls with the Foreign Ministers of France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, all of whom reiterated their support for the cessation of hostilities and the peace process facilitated by the United Nations. The success of the upcoming talks will require the consistent and coherent support of the region and the international community at large.

In a few hours, I shall leave for Kuwait in order to facilitate the next round of Yemeni peace talks. In that context, I should like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Kuwait, which has generously offered to host the talks. I also extend my thanks to the Sultanate of Oman for its political and logistical support for the efforts of the United Nations in the region. The talks will begin on 18 April and seek to reach a comprehensive agreement to end the conflict and allow the resumption of inclusive political dialogue, in accordance with resolution 2216 (2015) and other relevant resolutions. The talks will build on a negotiating framework that provides a mechanism for a return to a peaceful and orderly transition based on the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and the National Dialogue outcomes.

I will encourage the parties to the talks to negotiate a detailed way forward, starting with each of the following areas: the creation of interim security arrangements; the withdrawal of militias and armed groups; the hand-over of heavy weapons to the State; the restoration of State institutions and the resumption of inclusive political dialogue; and the release of prisoners and detainees. With these components, we are building on what has been discussed and agreed in principle in resolution 2216 (2015). This framework provides a strong foundation for developing a new political consensus that will help Yemen to achieve the stability and security that its people deserve and its future requires. A positive outcome will require difficult compromises on the part of all sides, as well as determination to reach an agreement. I encourage all sides to come to the talks in good faith and with a flexible attitude in order to reach a political solution and a final way out of the current crisis. The path to peace may be arduous, but it can be navigated.

Yemen is now at a crucial crossroads. One path leads to peace, while the other can only lead to a humanitarian and security crisis. The Security Council must maintain its support for Yemen and the peace process in the coming weeks, which will help Yemen to reach a comprehensive ceasefire and return to a peaceful, inclusive political process. I wish to thank all members of the Council for the trust and unyielding support in ensuring that the rights of Yemenis are well respected.

In conclusion, I would ask all Council members to dwell on this critical, historic moment. We have never been so close to peace. Will all parties rise to the occasion and genuinely engage in peace talks? Can they acknowledge their differences and agree to overcome obstacles? Can they drop their belligerent and destructive attitudes now that we are so close to peace? That is what we are asking for. We will have our answer in the coming days.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Cheikh Ahmed for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Kang.

Ms. Kang: I thank the Security Council for this opportunity to brief it on the latest humanitarian developments in Yemen on behalf of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Stephen O'Brien.

We welcome the cessation of hostilities, which is a long-awaited respite at a time of appalling suffering and trauma in Yemen. More than 6,400 people have now been killed, and over 30,500 have been injured. Displacement has spiked, with some 2.8 million people having been forced from their homes. Livelihoods have been ravaged. Some 14.1 million people now need help accessing adequate health care as a result of a year of intensified conflict. The lack of supplies, medicines, electricity, fuel for generators, and staff or equipment have caused health services to decline across the country. Entire governorates have been engulfed in relentless violence. For example, in Ta'izz governorate, intensified fighting in and around Ta'izz City since mid-March has left scores of people dead and wounded and has also significantly hampered relief work.

Children have been particularly affected; they are among the most vulnerable in any society but they are all the more so in Yemen. Up until 10 April, when the cessation took effect, an average of six children had been killed or maimed in hostilities each day since March last year. Secondary effects of war and neglect also kill. UNICEF estimates that some 10,000 children under the age of 5 may have died in the past year from preventable diseases, and this in addition to the 40,000 children who die in Yemen every year before their fifth birthday.

Nor can we ignore the dismal reality that women face in Yemen today, which is a crisis that barely registers on the world's radar. Over half a million pregnant women lack access to health care that would ensure safe births, and, although notoriously underreported in Yemen, the number of recorded cases of gender-based violence is steadily increasing. And at the time when the burden upon the women of Yemen is increasing, with women the primary providers for nearly a third of all displaced households across the country, over 40 per cent of women-run businesses have closed in the past year.

This paints a very bleak picture, but there is some cause for very cautious optimism. The cessation of hostilities is bringing calm to many areas of the country, reducing the crippling violence that has devastated communities. In addition, following efforts by the United Nations and partners to prepare to scale up operations where possible in anticipation of the cessation of hostilities, humanitarian organizations have begun to respond in areas that were previously difficult to access. For example, in Sa'ada, UNICEF was able to restart the rehabilitation of a water facility in Kitaf district serving some 10,000 people, which had been damaged in air strikes. As a result of the calm, parents in the governorate are also more willing to send their children to school again, and efforts are being undertaken to reopen around 100 schools. And unlike in previous efforts in Sa'ada, the calm has allowed for vaccination teams to go door to door, increasing the number of children reached.

In Ta'izz City, one of the most severely affected by hostilities, three mobile health and nutrition teams have been deployed, including to districts in the enclave, and partners will be delivering medical supplies for over 130,000 people. Some 240,000 people are now receiving food assistance in the Al Jawf, Al Dhale'e and Ta'izz governorates. As the cessation of hostilities continues to strengthen, the humanitarian community will similarly increase assistance on the ground in the most affected areas.

At the same time, United Nations agencies and partners continue to ramp up ongoing relief efforts across the country. Coinciding with the start of the cessation of hostilities, a nationwide polio vaccination campaign targeting around 5 million children was successfully launched with the support of UNICEF, the World Health Organization and the World Bank. This extraordinary effort has involved more than 19,000 mobile vaccination teams of over 46,000 health workers and some 5,000 vehicles that were rented to facilitate monitoring across all governorates. Around 3.5 million people are receiving food assistance each month from the World Food Programme. So far this

year, around 2.2 million people have been reached with health interventions in 22 governorates through the procurement of medicines, the provision of trauma kits, immunizations, and the maintaining of an uninterrupted supply-chain management system. Some 2.3 million people have been reached with emergency water and sanitation programmes, and United Nations Population Fund has this month established two shelters in Yemen where survivors of gender-based violence can receive legal, psychosocial and health services.

Millions of fearful, innocent civilians across Yemen, on whichever side of the conflict lines they reside, are being reached, and lives are being saved. But this is hardly enough. The cessation of hostilities must be made to hold.

Despite these efforts by humanitarian agencies, vital operations continue to be hampered by a variety of bureaucratic impediments, principally by the authorities on the ground. Missions are frequently cancelled due to lack of clearance. Interference with implementing-partner selection is common. There has been no headway in negotiating the start of the nationwide emergency food-security and nutrition assessment, which has been blocked for seven months now, and there remain long lists of critical humanitarian supplies sitting in warehouses or in ports awaiting clearance by the authorities. These include United Nations armoured vehicles, along with approximately 100 protective vests and helmets required for United Nations staff to expand and operate safely, particularly on missions outside Sana'a.

Progress is also required towards simplifying the current deconfliction mechanism with the coalition. For operations to meaningfully expand during the cessation and beyond, as well as for existing humanitarian relief efforts to consistently reach those most in need, these impediments must be immediately removed.

In that context, I underscore that the terms for the cessation of hostilities not only include a halt in hostilities but also obligate the parties to allow unhindered humanitarian assistance. I remind all parties that this facilitation is an obligation under international humanitarian law. While air strikes, rockets and ground fighting indiscriminately kill civilians, these administrative obstacles are only nominally less devastating, as they directly contribute to hunger, sickness, deprivation and death.

Operations are also being impacted financially. Now into the second quarter of 2016, the Yemen humanitarian response plan remains critically underfunded, at only 16 per cent. To date, $296 million has been received against the $1.8 billion requested. In order for humanitarian agencies, both United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations, to continue their work, more funding is required now. Because it is so critical that this assistance reach everyone in need across the country with impartiality, it is important that funding be given through the humanitarian response plan released earlier this year.

Commercial imports have notably decreased over the past two months, primarily because of delays in the coalition clearance process, in particular for vessels trying to reach the port at Al Hudaydah. Delays in the delivery of commercial goods into Yemen have a direct humanitarian consequence. Constricting the pipeline of food, fuel and medical supplies into the country means that less will be available for civilian consumption and that what is delivered will be available only at an inflated price. For example, in February, only 15 per cent of the monthly fuel requirement was delivered, while food imports fell by a quarter. As a consequence, prices rose and civilians faced greater hardship.

The Steering Committee of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) met for the first time on 11 April, to be followed by a second meeting on 18 April. In the past 12 hours, the representative from the Government of Yemen to the Steering Committee affirmed to the United Nations that the Government of Yemen had agreed to the UNVIM head office being located in Djibouti. It is now a matter of urgency that, during the upcoming meeting, UNVIM be fully operationalized as a single mechanism for the clearance of commercial vessels into Yemen. To delay further will have far-reaching consequences, increasing the already severe humanitarian needs.

Despite the overwhelming human tragedy that characterizes Yemen today, we maintain hope that the parties to the conflict will choose the only path to a solution, namely, negotiation and dialogue over the coming weeks, no matter how challenging that path may seem. There is no military solution. We will continue to deliver humanitarian assistance to those in need, but what is needed above all in Yemen is peace — peace for nearly three and a half million children, the country's next generation, to return to school; for the displaced to return home; for livelihoods to recover and for the

rebuilding of social service infrastructure, heritage sites and communities.

For the people of Yemen, peace is not something abstract; it is vital to their survival. I call on the parties to redouble their commitment to finding a negotiated political settlement to the conflict, and call upon all Member States and the Council to continue to support such genuine efforts. Meanwhile, as the process develops, we cannot simply wait and hope. Action is required. Parties to the conflict must recognize their responsibility to protect the civilians of Yemen and facilitate the unfettered delivery of impartial aid to the people in need. Similarly, the delivery of commercial goods to the country must be better managed through the UNVIM process to relieve the acute price and availability pressures on daily necessities. Building barriers around the people of Yemen — through access restrictions, delivery delays or visa denials for humanitarian staff — is not in the interest of peace or of the Yemeni people. It will prolong the suffering of those in need and drive more and more communities into real and life-threatening risk. The cessation of hostilities is a crucial window of action, both for the parties to the conflict to consider peace and for those civilians caught in its grasp to receive much-needed aid.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ms. Kang for her briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to convey our gratitude to the members of the Security Council for their ongoing efforts and attention to the issue of Yemen through their scrupulous following of the peace process in my country. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who has paid particular attention to the crisis in Yemen through his Special Adviser on Yemen, Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and his working team.

Significant efforts have been undertaken to ensure the success of the political talks in Kuwait in order to make progress on a comprehensive solution to the conflict and to prevent any backsliding. The Government of the Yemeni Republic has extended an olive branch and worked in a constructive manner to support United Nations efforts to achieve a lasting peace and put an end to unilateral measures that undermine the political solution, a process that has been organized by the United Nations since 2011. Today, we are working with the United Nations team to ensure the success of the talks with the putschists, which are to be held in the brotherly country of Kuwait in the days to come. Those talks, in the eyes of the Yemeni people and observers, are the last chance for peace in the country.

The convening of the Yemeni talks in Kuwait are symbolic in many ways. Kuwait is an active member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which has not abandoned Yemen in its darkest hours. It has organized numerous inter-Yemeni dialogue events during the conflict in Yemen. Our patient and resilient people await the talks in Kuwait in order to achieve lasting peace and agreements that bring new life to the changes under way in the country, in the light of the GCC Initiative, the outcomes of the National Dialogue and the relevant Security Council resolutions, namely, resolution 2216 (2015).

Our people support the urgent humanitarian actions undertaken to begin the rebuilding and economic recovery period to put an end to this coup d'état nightmare, which has ripped apart the country's social fabric and led civilians to flee.

We reiterate the Yemeni Government's support for the efforts undertaken by the Special Adviser and his team. We call upon the international community to provide all forms of support necessary to the efforts of the Under-Secretary-General and his Office. The process conducted by the United Nations is the only one we support because of its clear agenda and terms of reference, which were drawn up together with the GCC Initiative; the outcomes of the National Dialogue and Security Council resolutions, such as resolution 2216 (2015); and other relevant United Nations resolutions, which summarize the outcomes of the Bonn negotiations.

After five days of the cessation of hostilities, the De-escalation and Coordination Committee began its work in Kuwait on 3 April. It has received several reports regarding attacks perpetrated by the Houthi and pro-Saleh militias against Ta'izz City and its inhabitants, which are aimed at forcing them to submit and which target civilians and densely populated cities with Katyusha rockets and mortar fire. The Al-Wazia region in Ta'izz has been besieged by putschists and Houthis, who continue with their goal of opening a new fronts. This demonstrates clearly to the international community that these individuals refuse the transition to peace and think that violence can benefit them at the negotiating table. However, that is an illusion.

The same thing is happening in Sana'a, the beloved capital of Yemen, which has been transformed by putschist militias into an open-air prison. Thousands of people — be they politicians, military officers, intellectuals, journalists and activists — have all fallen subject to many forms of physical and psychological torture. We are waiting for the Houthis and pro-Saleh elements to act in good faith, before the talks in Kuwait begin, and free prisoners, as this nightmare has lasted far too long. On behalf of my people, the resilient Yemeni people, we ask the Houthis and the pro-Saleh elements to choose peace and put an end to the bloodletting in order to save my country, Yemen.

As we head to Kuwait, we wait for peace to return to Yemen and for the militias that control the State to return to the negotiating table. A society built on the rule of law, a unified State, a State of justice and equality must not accept a State within a State or the existence of militia bearing arms in Yemen.

We call upon the Security Council and the United Nations to reject the interference of Iran and its terrorist affiliates in the region, which seek to interfere in Yemen's affairs and to destabilize regional security. Iran's interference is clear and hardly needs proof, as heard in the statements of high-ranking Iranian officials who encourage violence by sending weapons to Houthi rebels and to Ali Abdullah Saleh. The most recent examples of that were three arms convoys on 27 February, 20 and 27 March, incidents that were reported by the American authorities and which included Kalishnikov rifles, missiles, shells, rocket launchers and other equipment used to perpetuate the conflict and sow chaos in Yemen and the region, in flagrant violation of the arms embargo pursuant to resolution 2216 (2015).

It has become clear to everyone that there is a relation between the Houthi and Saleh militias. Investigations have been undertaken by the Security Council sanctions committees with regard to the link connecting terrorist networks, Al-Qaida and Da'esh in particular, with regard to the sale of oil and arms trafficking.

The Yemeni Government calls on the international community to cooperate in its fight against that terrorism, in particular with regard to the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters and the financing of terrorism. Those two issues are the direct responsibility of the international community. Not dealing with them will result in providing additional resources to terrorist activities in every region throughout the world.

It is appropriate for me to conclude by highlighting the core nature of United Nations activities. There is an extremely important issue at hand, that is, the recruitment of children by the Houthi militias, which put them in harm's way and use them as cannon fodder for their unjust wars against the Yemini people. The Houthi and Saleh coalition of death militias recruit children in the regions that they control, which is an assault on the youth and future generations in Yemen.

Finally, I reiterate our gratitude for all of the efforts that the Council is carrying out, and in Yemen we will never forget those efforts and will record them in the our history books.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.